

THE WORLD WITHIN

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FOREWORD

By Maulana Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani مد ظله العالی
Vice Chancellor Darul Uloom Karachi

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلوة والسلام على رسوله الكريم وعلى
آله واصحابه اجمعين - اما بعد

During the blessed month of Ramadhan my honourable father Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمه الله عليه was requested by some gentlemen to discuss the topic of Tasawwuf its definition and basic injunctions. My honourable father رحمه الله kindly complied and thus, every day after the Fajr-prayers he delivered lectures regarding this issue. These lectures would at times last fifteen, twenty minutes, or may be half an hour or even longer. These talks turned out to be so Appealing and beneficial that those who attended those assemblies recall the same fondly, cherishing the memories thereof.

Many erroneous notions concerning Tasawwuf found their way into the minds of people. Some hold it to be an innovation, which has nothing to do with the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, others consider it to be the sole source of salvation, absolving them from abiding by the Holy Law which is according to them in utter opposition to the mystical path.

My honourable father رحمه الله عليه has, in these lectures, depicted the reality and essence of Tasawwuf in so excellent a manner that all misunderstandings regarding Tasawwuf were removed, and he proved that Tasawwuf, too, is a branch of religion which is based on nothing but the pure teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah.

These lectures were preserved with the help of a tape-recorder and thereafter the author of these lines began to put these lectures into writing. And when my Idarah began to bring out the monthly 'Al Balagh' I published in each edition a part of those lectures in a column entitled 'Dil ki Dunya'. My

honourable father رحمه الله عليه, too, went through the written version of those lectures and made occasionally certain amendment and additions.

Unfortunately this activity could not continue for too long and the tape which I used as basis for my writing was last, too.

So I hoped that one day my honourable father himself would be able to complete the series of lectures, but he could not find the time due to his preoccupation with his own work as well as his failing health, until he passed away **إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ**.

Now my nephews Maulwi Naeem Ashraf and Maulwi Faheem Ashraf سلمه expressed their intention to get a collection of these articles published by the Idaratul Qur'an wal Uloom Al Islamiyah, inspite of the fact that many of the lectures could not be transcribed yet.

But the articles which were included in this collection are themselves extremely useful as they at least acquaint the reader with the reality of Tasawwuf as well as some of its rudimentary principles.

Further reading these articles helps a person develop concern to reform himself.

I pray to Allah Most High that He makes this collection beneficial for the Ummat that we all benefit thereof and that He inspires us to concentrate on reforming ourselves.

Most humble,
Muhammad Taqi Usmani
Darul Uloom Karachi Nr. 14
19 Zul Qa'dah 1416

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

THE SCIENCE OF TASAWWUF AND ITS SUBJECT

”سپارہ دل میں کہ کتابے بہ ازیں نیست“

You and I, we are human beings, a fact of which we are proud indeed. But have you ever thought what makes a 'human being'? is it his flesh, his hands, feet, nose, ears, his bodily structure? Does the expression 'human being' pertain only to our physical existence, our body, limbs and organs? If you ponder about this then the answer to this query will be negative, because certain events contradict this supposition. take the following example in order to understand the above.

Zaid is a human being. As long as he is alive he is the rightful owner of his wealth, his property and estate. He is the husband of his wife, in his office he is the boss. He gives instructions to his subordinates, those junior to him fear him. As long as he has not breathed his last no one has got the right to make use of his property unless with his explicit permission; no one is allowed to seize his estate, no one may marry his wife. If anyone dares to do so, then he will have to taste the legal consequences of his action, he will be punished for his misdoings.

But as soon as Zaid breathed his last, as soon as his heart stops beating, he is no longer the owner of his wealth, his estate, his belongings. He ceases to be the husband of his wife, his authority no longer extends over his subordinates. His mortal remains are still in the place which used to be his house, but all his possessions belong already to someone else. The house which he got built for himself is now owned by others, the servants whom he used to command are now providing comfort to others.

If the expression 'human being' pertains only to the

outward appearance, the bodily structure consisting of flesh and bones, then the following question comes to one's mind, what caused this revolutionary change? The body with all its flesh and bones, organs and limbs, is still present. Its eyes, nose, ears, hands and feet are where they used to be, yet no one calls it a human being any more. Why does it no longer enjoy the rights and privileges enjoyed by other human beings?

From this is learnt that 'Zaid' was not just the name of this mass of flesh and bones. Who was 'Zaid'? Let us see which thing is missing, what ceased to exist in his dead body on account of which no one calls him a 'human being' any longer. If one thinks about it one comes to the conclusion that everything is as it used to be, except for one thing, his soul has departed from his body. And due to his soul having departed from his body he is no longer 'Zaid', the owner of bungalows and cottages who used to command his servants. From the above discussion has been learnt that a human being is more than just a body, a mass of flesh and bones, rather a human being consists of its outward structure and its soul. As long as body and soul are united one refers to this combination as 'human being, and once the soul departs from its physical confines there remains nothing but a dead, lifeless body which is no longer considered as a human being. The above findings can be rephrased as follows, that a human being exists in two spheres, one is the material and physical world which we can see with our eyes and touch with our hands. And along with this physical world coexists another world, a hidden, secret world which we can neither see nor feel. This is where the soul resides. The heart beats in this secret hidden world, in which all kinds of desires, wishes and longings come into being, in which feelings like happiness and grief, hatred and love, selflessness and greed are nurtured. And it is indeed amazing that this secret hidden world, which eyes cannot see and hands cannot feel is a human being's actual world. As long as everything functions smoothly in this world a human being is alive, entitled to receive all those rights and privileges enjoyed by other human beings. But once this world ceases to function,

once its delicate mechanism collapses this person is referred to only as dead body, and he stands deprived of all his rights and privileges

Then just like a human being's bodily structure suffers at times from diseases and at times it is in a state of good health, similarly his soul is at times well and sound and at other times various ailments affect it. The body might suffer from cold, influenza, fever and numerous other maladies, likewise spiritual diseases like anger, selfishness, pride, ostentatiousness, self-conceit and many others might befall the soul.

Since Islam is a comprehensive way of life, it has paid due regard to both spheres of human life. Whenever there are instructions pertaining to our physical existence the same are complimented by injunctions relevant to the secret world within ourselves. Just as it has been enjoined upon us to perform outward acts of worship like prayers, fast, pilgrimage, almsgiving and other similar acts of virtue, and to abstain from certain vices and sins, likewise we are commanded to embellish our souls with certain laudable attributes and to purify it from evil characteristics.

Whatever Islamic injunctions pertain to our outward life are being dealt with in the science of Fiqh, and injunctions concerning our spiritual life are the subject of Tasawwuf.

Thus the actual subject of Tasawwuf is the world within ourselves, within our hearts, which, although we cannot see it with our eyes, constitutes an extremely important part of our very existence. Now one might ask what is the heart? If one was to ask a doctor or physician about the heart he would reply that it is a lump of flesh situated in the chest, slightly towards the left, and that its chambers are filled with blackish blood, and that it continuously pumps blood which is indicated by the throbbing sound which we call 'heart beat', likewise doctors and physicians would define 'soul' as the steam and vapour which the heart generates from the blood passing through it and which is then made to reach every part

of the body through the vessels which are known as arteries.

But the thing referred to as 'heart' and 'soul' in the terminology of Tasawwuf completely differs from the definition given by doctors and physicians. It refers to these subtle forces which the Almighty has created along with a human being's material heart and soul. Just like the eyes are our instruments of vision, the ears our means of hearing and the hands assist us in touching and feeling, likewise this lump of flesh which is called the heart has got the power to wish and desire. In the terminology of Tasawwuf this force which causes all kinds of feelings and emotions in a human being has been referred to as 'heart'.

How are these two subtle forces connected to our material heart? What is the relation between the two. This is something we are not able to understand. We just know that there is a relation between these two. Of which nature is this relation? Only Almighty Allah knows, who caused the relation between these two forces. We also don't know how and why the magnet and iron are related to each other. Why does a magnet not attract cotton or paper? Similarly we have no knowledge concerning the connection between this lump of flesh and the mysterious forces of the heart and soul. This is why the following verse was revealed where the pagans enquired about the nature of the soul:

قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي

i.e. 'the soul is a command from my lord, the reality of which you are not able to understand.'

Tasawwuf teaches us that the secret world within is in fact the foundation of a human being's outer world, man's success or failure, prosperity or ruin are dependent on it. If the world within functions smoothly, if it generates sound feelings and emotions then the human being is also in a state of well-being and if it does not function smoothly, then man's outward life is also negatively affected. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has stated this very fact already fourteen hundred years ago. He said,

الا ان في الجسد لمضغة اذا صلحت صلح الجسد كله و اذا فسدت

فسد الجسد كله الا و هي القلب.

i.e., 'There is a lump of flesh in the body, if it is sound and healthy, then the whole body is sound and healthy, and if it is corrupt, then the whole body gets corrupt. (This lump of flesh) is the heart.'

Now what is meant by keeping one's heart healthy and sound and by corrupting it? What causes it to prosper and what spoils it? What are its diseases? How to cure them? Well, these are the various topics of Tasawwuf, and these are the topics I would like to discuss in our forthcoming assemblies.

THE NEED TO CURE SPIRITUAL AILMENTS

”علاج آتش رومی کے سوز میں ہے تیرا“

In the last assembly we have come to the conclusion that a human being is more than just a mass of flesh and bones, rather its exquisiteness consists of the secret world within its outward bodily structure which has been interpreted as the 'heart', 'soul' and other similar terms. Then in a tradition quoted by Imam Bukhari in his 'Saheeh' it has been mentioned that the soundness of a person's actions or the corruption thereof depends on the soundness or corruption of his innermost feelings and emotions.

Today we shall learn that just like a human being's material body is at times healthy and sound, and at other times it is afflicted by disease, and that in order to keep it healthy one resorts to nutritious diet, fresh air and so on, and that one uses medicines to rid the body of diseases, similarly one needs to look after one's spiritual health. Spiritual health is indicated by recognition of one's Lord and Creator, by frequently remembering Him and being grateful to Him and by obeying Him commandment. The sickness of one's soul consists of being neglectful of the Almighty and failing to obey Him. In the Holy Qur'an is mentioned:

فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا

'There is disease in their hearts (the disease of infidelity and disobedience), so Allah further increased their malady.'

Infidelity, polytheism, hypocrisy, jealousy, malice, pride, arrogance, greed, parsimony, love of fame, love of wealth and so on are spiritual ailments. And spiritual health means to recognize one's Lord and Creator, to know that benefit and harm, ease and distress are in His hands alone, to be grateful for His blessings and to be patient if afflicted by an adversity. To trust Him in all one's affairs, to hope for His mercy and to fear His punishment. To seek His good will and pleasure and

to abide by the Divine ordinances with utmost sincerity.

The Holy Qur'an is the perfect remedy for all kinds of spiritual ailments:

وَنَزَّلَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

'And We reveal of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy for the believers.'

And elsewhere has been mentioned:

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءٌ

'Say: The Qur'an is a guidance and cure for those who believe.'

There is however a big difference between physical and spiritual diseases. The former can be perceived through one's senses, they can be diagnosed through checking the pulse and examining blood and excreta, they can be cured through medicines or surgery. Spiritual diseases however are invisible, neither a person's pulse nor his bodily discharges indicate the presence of such a disease. Similarly they cannot be cured through medicines, surgery or a change in diet. Such diseases can only be diagnosed and treated according to the principles laid down in the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger ﷺ. The Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His messenger ﷺ contain a complete course of reformation, whether it be with regard to one's outward actions, beliefs or character.

Whatever degree of perfection a believer has attained, from the days of the companions and those who followed them up to the righteous luminaries of our modern times is only because of their adherence to those reformatory principles. They were not only perseverant with regard to outer forms of worship such as prayers, fast, pilgrimage, alms-giving, but also with regard to inward acts such as sincerity, truthfulness, belief in the oneness of Allah, humbleness, patience, gratitude, placing their trust in Allah, abstentiousness and so on. Just as they saved themselves from committing outward sins like theft, fraud, indecency, dishonesty... they also abstained from inward sins like pride, arrogance, love for wealth and fame,

looking down upon others, parsimony, greed and so on, knowing them to be as unlawful and prohibited as any outward sin.

The scholars of this Ummat have, for the benefit of the public, rearranged the complex teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah by dividing the same into various sciences and branches. Outward actions like prayer, fast, pilgrimage, zakat, marriage, divorce and other dealings are subject of Fiqh, the science of jurisprudence, and as far as inward actions are concerned, matters relating to faith are being dealt with by the science of Aqaid or creeds, and spiritualism or Tasawwuf deals with morals manners and ethical behaviour.

Some scholars have combined these aspects of knowledge in their writings. Allamah Ibn Subuki has in the epilogue of his book 'Jam'ul Jawami', which is a famous treatise of Usool-e-Fiqh, mentioned also some details concerning Tasawwuf, ethics and inward actions.

Imam Qushairi رحمه الله عليه in his treatise 'Qushairiya', Hazrat Suharwardy رحمه الله عليه in his 'Awariful Ma'arif', Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه in his 'Ihya Uloom' and many others have in their respective writings, discussed the importance of inward actions and their reformation at length, and in our modern age Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمه الله عليه has written a number of extremely comprehensive books on this subject, such as At-Takashshuf, At-Tasharruf, Masaail-e-Sulook, Taleemud-deen, Qasdu-Sabeel and many others. But since quite some time, due to the Muslims' general negligence of their religion and the related sciences, the majority of Muslims has become estranged from all branches of knowledge of their faith, particularly the one mentioned last, which relates to the reformation of inward actions; this has been so gravely neglected that not only the public but even a great number of scholars have become unmindful thereof.

People think that religion consists only of performing a few outward actions; virtues like sincerity, truthfulness, reliance on

the Almighty, knowing Him to be One, patience, gratitude, contentment, abstinence and piety have lost their meaning, and people are no longer concerned to reform themselves, to rid themselves of such spiritual diseases like love for fame, love for wealth, arrogance, pride, anger, malice, jealousy and so on. In this regard I therefore address first of all my own person and then other people of knowledge, that we have adopted a kind of religious appearance, that we are being considered as abiding by the Holy Law – at least as far as outward actions are concerned, and that we strive to keep away from all such sins which the common people think to be an insult to our status as scholars, and those who get involved in these sins are viewed with disdain by the people. But unfortunately we make no effort to save ourselves from spiritual vices which are in fact far more destructive than other sins.

We should ask ourselves that if our prayers, fasts and other acts of worship or our avoiding sins like theft, obscenity, pleasure-seeking, visiting cinemas and so on, are indeed resulting from our concern for the Hereafter and our fear of the Almighty, then how come that we are – without the least degree of worry – involved in sins much greater than the ones mentioned above, and from the commission of which neither our fear of Allah nor our concern for the Hereafter prevents us. Might it not be possible that our outward actions are not purely for Allah, that they are rather the outcome of our vocational mindset, that they are not related to God and the Hereafter, but rather to our profession; that if we fail to be punctual in our prayers and other religious observances or happen to penetrate any outward injunction of the Holy Law, we might lose our post as lecturer, Mufti, Imam, Khateeb and so on. This is why we avoid only such sins which cannot be hidden under our robes and turbans and the dignity of our profession. Spiritual vices however are easily screened by our outward appearance, that is why we deem them so trifling. This kind of thinking is the only reason why our educational and missionary efforts remain fruitless, rather their having become a source of contention and all kinds of tribulations.

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

History bears witness to the fact that only the educational, missionary and reformatory efforts of such scholars had a lasting impact whose hearts were full of piety, sincerely and fear of Allah. On the other hand how many research-scholars and investigators are there who have passed into oblivion.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا اسئلك الهدى والتقى والعفاف والغنى

THE ESSENCE OF TASAWWUF AND EXCESSES COMMITTED IN THIS REGARD

In our last assemblies we have come to know that what we call a 'human being' is in fact a compound of body and soul. The Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah which contain the outlines for man's prosperity and success in both worlds addresses both aspects of human existence. For the sake of convenience matters relating to outward actions such as acts of worship marriage, divorce, day-to-day dealings have been compiled under the head 'Fiqh' i.e. the science of jurisprudence. Whereas matters relating to spirit and soul, like tenets of faith and ethics are the subject of 'Aqaid' and 'Tasawwuf' i.e. beliefs and spiritualism. In fact these are various aspects of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah. They are distinct from each other only in so far as hands, feet, eyes, nose, heart, liver, intestines and so on are different limbs and organs, but only together they make up a perfect human being. They are dependent on each other, none of them can exist on its own. The existence of one does not exclude the existence of the other, nor does the functioning of one cause the malfunctioning of the other.

Similarly there is no doubting the fact that Aqaid, Fiqh and Tasawwuf are separate and distinct fields of knowledge, but it is a prerequisite for a perfect human being or a believer to appreciate these sciences as a whole living according to the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah is not possible until one puts all these aspects of knowledge into practice. Accepting only one aspect and rejecting the other is as destructive as preserving one's faculty of hearing and allowing one's eyes to go waste. Considering Fiqh and Tasawwuf as opponents of each other is like considering one's eyes and ears to be in opposition to each other.

Only those noble souls in whom Almighty Allah has united all those teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah are in a position to comprehend the reality of the same and

their sayings in this regard are instrumental to appreciate the lofty nature of those teachings.

Shah Waliullah رحمه الله عليه has said:

'Shariat without Tareeqat (i.e. Tasawwuf) is mere philosophy, whereas Tareeqat without Shariat amounts to sheer heresy.'

In this simple sentence Shah Waliullah رحمه الله عليه has disclosed the reality of those fields of knowledge. How many hypocrites were very well acquainted with the injunctions of the Holy Law (i.e. those pertaining to outward acts). And even today there are hundreds of Jews, Christians, atheistic orientalists who have studied the Islamic sciences in depth, who have got full knowledge thereof yet it is nothing but mere philosophy for them, not religion. And it will not become religion for them as long as they do not firmly believe those injunctions to be indeed the truth, as long as they do not abide by the injunctions of the Holy Law whether these pertain to inward or outward actions. This is why mere knowledge of the Law, no matter how perfect this knowledge might be, is no indicator of spiritual greatness, nor does it have any weight in the sight of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

Likewise acting contrary to the injunction the Shariat, in the name of Tareeqat and Tasawwuf, is nothing but heresy.

Hazrat Qazi Sanaullah Panipati has said:

'No one's soul can be cleansed unless his body be cleansed.'

A renowned scholar and Sufi Shaikh of the fourth century after Hijra, Imam Abul Qasim Qushairee, left a message for his contemporaries among the Mashaikh of Sufism, a detailed treatise named 'Risala-e-Qushairee', which is considered the basis of all subsequent writings on this subject. In the preamble of this treatise he has clearly shown that Tareeqat is nothing independent from Shariat, rather that means strict adherence to the Holy Law and the Sunnah, in proof of which he has cited several luminaries of Tasawwuf. In the first chapter he has explained that after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ the best of people were those who benefited from his company, and that the excellence of those people consisted in their being

'Sahabis', i.e. companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

And those who had acquired religious knowledge and the ability to act accordingly from the noble companions رضي الله عنه, these people are called 'Tabi' or successors, and the generation thereafter known as 'Taba' Tabi' or those who followed the successors. All of them strictly abided by the Holy Law and the Sunnah, duly regarding all the sacred injunctions concerning inward and outward deeds, they had united in themselves both aspects, Shariat and Tareeqat, to such a degree of perfection never attained thereafter. Their honourary appellations did not consist of any reference to their scholarly achievements, rather they were known as 'Sahabi', 'Tab'i' and 'Tab'a Tab'i'.

The generations who followed them had adopted different ways, some of them mainly occupied themselves with the acquisition and dissemination of religious knowledge as were as with literary compositions and completions.

They too had reached perfection as far as knowledge of spiritual matters and inward deeds are concerned, but they were less occupied therewith. They had become experts of sciences pertaining to outward matters and they were referred to as 'Alim', 'Muhaddith', 'Mufassir' or 'Faqeeh', depending on the subject in which they had specialized themselves. Others had dedicated themselves fully to the practical aspect of religion, so they were called 'Abid' and 'Zahid', but yet their knowledge of the Shariat was in no way deficient. Then however some people had joined this group of worshippers and ascetics who deviated from the ways of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, who got involved in all kinds of innovations. Thus different groups came into being and in each group there were some people who became known as worshippers and ascetics.

At that time those people who shared the beliefs held by the Ahl-e-Sunnah wal Jamaah and who, besides strictly abiding by the injunctions of the Holy Law, had focused on worship asceticism and perfecting their inner state were referred to as Ahl-e-Tasawwuf, and thus already before the end of the second

century after Hijra these senior Mashaikh became known as Ahl-e-Tasawwuf, who along with firmly adhering to the outward injunctions of the Shariat and the Sunnah, took utmost care to guard every single breath, to continuously engage themselves in zikrullah and to keep away from any thing leading to neglectfulness and oblivion. Imam Qushairee has put it thus:

ثم ظهرت البدع وحصل التداعي بين الفرق فكل فريق ادعوا ان فيهم
زهادا فانفرد خواص اهل السنة المراعون انفسهم مع الله تعالى
الحافظون قلوبهم عن طوارق الغفلة باسم التصوف واشتهر هذا الاسم
فهؤلاء الأكابر قبل المائتين من الهجرة-

Then some innovations appeared among the Muslims, and every sect began to claim that among them, too, are ascets, so incline to them. At that time, for the sake of distinction, those Ahl-e-Sunnat who followed this particular way, who in order to strengthen their relation would guard every single breath of theirs and who would protect their hearts from being contaminated with anything leading to negligence, were called Ahl-e-Tasawwuf, and they were known by this name already before the second century after Hijra.

From the above excerpt is learnt that during the age of the pious ancestors (Salaf) only such people became known as Sufis and Ahl-e-Tasawwuf who strictly abided by the Holy Law, avoiding all kinds of innovations. Those who subjected themselves merely to all kinds of spiritual exercises and asceticism without following the Sunnah, were not called Sufis. Rather this name was a means to distinguish the former from the latter. Moreover the only difference between the scholars and the Ahl-e-Tasawwuf was that due to a general decrease of stamina it was no longer possible for them to reach perfection with regard to outward and inward deeds, or to equally dedicate themselves to both aspects at the same time, so the scholars occupied themselves mainly with teaching, writing, issuing verdicts and academic criticism and established Madaaris for that purpose. The Sufis on the other hand focused on reforming their inner state of being as well as that of their brothers in faith. For this purpose Khanqah's were established.

It was merely what one could call 'division of labour', completely void of mutual differences, because neither were the scholars unmindful of their inner state of being nor were the Sufis unacquainted with various injunctions of the Holy Law, nor would they consider each other's field of activity as less important than their own.

But things changed as time went by. There was a considerable decline of experts of both fields. On one hand the scholars began to neglect Zikrullah, their concern for the Hereafter decreased and their love for Allah and His Messenger ﷺ the utmost limit of which is prerequisite for the station of perfect faith became deficient, too. The Sufis, on the other hand became less and less well-acquainted with the injunctions of the Holy Law; there was notable deficiency in their implementing the Sunnat and the Shariat, as a result thereof the institutions of Madaaris and Khanqahs became rivals finding faults with each other. The Ahl-e-Madaaris considered knowledge of some legal intricacies to be the pinnacle of perfection and similarly the people in the Khanqahs thought about some routine set of recitals and optional prayers. In the Madaaris hardly any importance was given to inner deeds and actions whereas the Khanqahs distanced themselves more and more from Sunnat and the Shariat, so much that Tasawwuf remained nothing more than the name of a few rituals which had no basis in the Holy Law.

Thus the Ummat was at loss in two ways, one that these two groups were in charge of reforming the Muslim community, and their suffering was already a tragedy great enough, two, that their differences and their mutual rivalry had divided the Muslims. What was even worse, among the Muslims many people became disgusted with both groups, they however lacked knowledge and aptitude to properly understand the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, and to put the same into practice. They were comparable to a patient who has no idea how to treat his ailment and yet loathes doctors and physicians. As a result of their negative attitude towards scholars of religion they contended

themselves with mere reading of relevant literature to acquire religious knowledge. This resulted in their adopting certain opinions regarding a number of Qur'anic masaa'il which differed considerably from the views held by the remaining members of his Ummat. This caused yet another problem, namely that many matters pertaining to religion were modified and amended then there were some people who made the scholars object of their criticism, even to the extent of mocking and ridiculing them, others who did so with the honourable Sufis and again others who did so with both.

According to one prediction made by Allah's Messenger ﷺ Allah would send unto this Ummah at the end of every century such a scholar (or a group of scholars who would resolve such perplexities and give new life to religion. In not so distant past this service was rendered by Mujaddid Alf Thani رحمه الله and in India by Syed Ahmad Sahib Bareilwi. Then amongst our elders those who established the Darul Uloom Deoband, not only was their knowledge of the injunctions of the Shariat sheer unmatched, they moreover abounded in spiritual qualities. The Darul Uloom founded by them was therefore a perfect fusion between Madarsah and Khanqah. My honourable father Maufana Muhammad Yasin Sahib رحمه الله was born in the same year in which the foundation of the Darul Uloom Deoband was laid. He says 'I have witnessed that time when the whole staff of Darul Uloom, from its president to the in-charge, from the sweeper to the gate-keeper, every one was a Sahib-e-Nisbat, a friend of Allah. The gate-keeper was always engaged in Zikrullah, whole day long in the lecture-halls as well as in the dormitories you could hear the students discuss academic intricacies and at night you would hear every where recital of the Holy Qur'an as well as the enthralling sounds of Zikrullah.'

In the beginning the Darul Uloom did not have a mosque of its own so the teachers and the students used to offer their prayers in the nearby mosques. It was during the student days of this most humble servant that the mosque of the Darul Uloom was built. Maulana Mahmoodul Hassan رحمه الله

converted the year of its construction into the following phrase:

در مدرسه خانقاه دیدیم

'I behold a Khanqah in this institute of learning.'

If one adds up the numerical value of each letter in this phrase one gets year in which the mosque was built.

The above phrase captures beautifully the spirit of the Darul Uloom, and the whole world can see its blessed outcome hundreds of scholars who have graduated from here have, along with sound religious knowledge also acquired spiritual perfection. Back to their homelands they would awaken their compatriots religious consciousness and successfully counter the tempest of ignorance and innovation.

This institution brought forth such outstanding scholars, each of whom is like shining, dazzling star illuminating the firmament of the whole world of Islam. Among them were luminaries like Shaykhul Hind Mawlana Mahmood Hassan رحمه الله and Hakeemul Ummat Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمه الله, these few examples are already more than sufficient proof.

INWARD DEEDS

In the last assemblies it had been mentioned again and again that the Islamic injunctions are of two types, such as are related to the human body, limbs and organs, e.g. prayers, fast, Hajj, Zakat, sacrifice, charity, marriage, divorce, inheritance, trade, hire, dealings, livelihood and so on, and others which are related to a human beings heart and soul, e.g. faith, sincerity, Tawheed, truthfulness, love for Allah and His messenger ﷺ, gratitude, patience, contentment, abstentiousness and so forth.

Rules and regulations concerning the soundness or corruption of the former type of deeds are being dealt with in the books of Fiqh, whereas matters concerning the soundness or corruption of the latter type of deeds can be found in the books of Tasawwuf.

Religious injunctions of the first type are indeed a great hall mark of Islam, and injunctions of the second type are equally if not much more important. But unfortunately even religious - minded Muslims are deceived into thinking that Islam consists only of injunctions of the first type, those of the second type are utterly neglected, as though they were superfluous, having no importance at all. This careless attitude is not only witnessed among the common Muslims, but also even scholars and students of the Islamic sciences are extremely unmindful of reforming their inner state of being.

Therefore the topic of today's assemblies shall be 'Inward deeds.'

A SHORT LIST OF INWARD DEEDS

Just as outward deeds are divided into Faraaidh, Wajibaat and Mustahabbaat, which, if duly performed, yield tremendous reward, and neglecting them yields Divine Wrath and punishment, and just as some matters are prohibited or execrable and which if committed shall lead to severe chastisement, and the avoidance of which shall be rewarded,

similar some inward deeds are of obligatory nature (Fardh and Wajib). These are referred to as "Fadhaail" or virtues. And likewise there are some inward deeds which are absolutely unlawful and prohibited. These are called 'Razaail' or vices. Below is given a short description of those virtues and vices, which shall, Insha Allah, be discussed in detail during the next assemblies.

The greatest and most important obligation among the inward deeds is faith and certain creeds related to it, which actually make a Muslim. But since this is the subject of a distinct discipline, i.e. Ilm-e-Aqaaid, which constitutes a part of the curriculum taught in religious seminaries and schools, we shall in this assembly, rather divert our attention to other inward deeds, namely:

OBLIGATORY INWARD DEEDS

Tawbah, Sabr, Shukr, Rajaa, Khawf, Zuhd, Tawheed, Tawakkul, Muhabbat, Ridha, Ikhlas, Sidq-e-Amali.

These are technical terms, and explanation of their meaning and how to attain them shall be given at some later time.

PROHIBITED AND UNLAWFUL INWARD DEEDS

Anger, malice, jealousy, love for the world, parsimony, covetousness, love for fame, ostentation, pride, arrogance. These too, are technical terms. What they imply and how to save oneself from these vices shall be discussed at some later time.

AN IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INWARD AND OUTWARD DEEDS

In any of the last assemblies it has been pointed out that there is an important difference between inward and outward deeds, namely that one can actually observe outward deeds. Virtuous deeds like prayer, fast, Hajj, Zakat and so on, can be perceived, similarly evil deeds like theft, robbery, falsehood, backbiting, immorality, pleasure-seeking and so forth can be perceived. Anyone who has got eyes to see will be able to

distinguish a good deed from a bad one.

Inward deeds however are invisible. No one can see vices like pride, jealousy, malice, love for fame, love for wealth, ostentation, parsimony, covetousness and so on. If anyone be involved in these sins, but is regular in the performance of outward virtuous deeds, then no one will be able to say how corrupted the inner state of such a person is. Rather everyone will consider him to be god-fearing and pious.

Obviously such inward vices remain concealed from the sight of others, but what causes concern in that often not even the person involved in those vices is able to ascertain his state, because often they resemble virtues or permissible states, either in their appearance or effect.

For instance pride and sense of personal honour closely resemble each other. Pride however is unlawful whereas preserving one's personal honour is a requirement of the Holy Law. Jealousy and longing resemble each other. Jealousy however is prohibited, whereas longing is permissible, rather desirable according to the Holy Law, because it means that if anyone witnesses a person's good fortune or a certain blessing, he becomes desirous of acquiring the same. There is nothing wrong with this. Jealousy on the other hand, i.e. desiring that a person be deprived of his good fortune, is contemptible. Similarly all other inward vices closely resemble certain virtues or praiseworthy attributes, so the person involved in such vices is often under deception, he considers pride to be his sense of personal honour, and he holds jealousy to be longing for a blessing, and thus he is not in the least worried about his inner state of affairs.

THE NEED OF A MURSHID OR SPIRITUAL MENTOR IN ORDER TO REFORM ONE'S INNER STATE

In general it is not possible to reform one's inner state unless one commits oneself to such a *Shaykh* who is fully able to distinguish between virtues and vices, who fully understands the intricacies of the human soul, who himself strives to avoid all kinds of spiritual vices and who also

guides others in this regard. Then one must fully accept the assessment made by one's Shaykh leaving aside one's own theories and ideas, and one must act according to his instructions, just like a patient who consults a doctor or Hakeem regarding any ailment of his. A patient, too, accepts the diagnosis and strictly follows the doctor's instructions concerning medication and diet. Even a doctor or Hakeem, when sick, leave aside their own diagnosis and rather follow the course prescribed by their physician. Matters concerning the soundness or corruption of outward deeds can be enquired from a scholar, or one can oneself acquire such knowledge by studying relevant books. But in case of matters pertaining to reformation of one's inner state it does not suffice to read any book, even though one may have fully understood its contents, because usually it is not possible to reform oneself without following an accomplished spiritual mentor or Shaykh. It might however at times happen that Almighty Allah causes a person to succeed in this regard without his having adopted this mode of action, but that is rather an exception than the rule.

IMAM GHAZALI'S SUGGESTION CONCERNING REFORMATION OF ONE'S INNER STATE

Allah Most High has granted *Hujjatul Islam* Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه a peculiar understanding of the intricacies of the human soul, along with a remarkable talent of instruction and moral grooming. Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه holds that there are four ways to recognize one's evil traits.

THE FIRST WAY IS TO FOLLOW AN ACCOMPLISHED SHAYKH

The best way to become aware of one's evil traits and to rectify the same is to entrust oneself to such a person who strictly abides by the Holy Law and all its injunctions whether these be related to outward or inward deeds, who is able to recognize virtues and vices and who is able to suggest a suitable remedy for various spiritual ailments.

A SATANIC MISGIVING AND ITS REPLY

People tend to say things like 'where to find such a *Shaykh* in times as corrupt as ours. Fraud, deceit, ostentation and show have become so rampant that it is simply not possible to distinguish between an impostor and a genuine spiritual mentor. By causing people to recall countless instances anyone was deceived by so-called scholars, saints or dervishes, the devil wants people to loose hope and become desperate. Such people frequently cite this verse:-

خداوند! یہ تیرے سادہ دل بندے کدھر جائیں
کہ درویشی بھی سالوسی ہے سلطانی بھی عیاری

O God! Where are your simple minded servants supposed to go, now that fraud, lust for power and cunningness have become the dervish's way of life.

Keeping in view these corrupted times, the above complaint made by Allamah Iqbal is neither unjustified nor inappropriate. But it would be wrong to take this verse to mean that nowadays there is no hope for betterment of one's affairs, that there is no way to reform oneself, therefore one is at liberty to do as one pleases.

It needs to be seen whether only scholars and divines are affected by this degeneration of morals, whether only they have become corrupt and wicked or whether the same holds true for other segments of society. Who does not know that in spite of countless breakthroughs in the field of medicine, in spite of latest diagnostic devices and surgical instruments and in spite of highly effective medicines there is hardly any doctor who is indeed an expert in his profession and through whom people actually get cured. Among thousands of lawyers or attorneys only a handful seem to be trustworthy and reliable, among hundreds of thousands of traders only a selected few are honest in their dealings, and among hundreds of thousands of artisans there seem to be some who are skilled and integer. But yet no one prefers his own opinion over a doctor's diagnosis, nor does any one dispense of a lawyer's services

when it comes to any legal proceedings, nor has anyone stopped to deal with traders, nor with artisans and craftsmen. Rather people carefully choose some suitable person whom they entrust their affairs.

Nowadays neither pure ghee is available in the markets, nor milk, nor flour, nor spices. But yet no one has heard of anyone who stopped using any of these items, who stopped purchasing flour and started eating anything else instead. Rather he tries hard to find unadulterated, pure foodstuff and somehow succeeds. Why not proceed similarly regarding matters of religion? After all Allah Most High has promised us that there shall be men of truth who have attained spiritual perfection until the Day of Judgment, and anyone who sincerely looks for them shall find them, for sure. Says Almighty Allah in the Glorious Qur'an.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

'O Ye who believe! Be careful of your duty to Allah and be with the truthful ones.'

'Sadiqueen' i.e. truthful ones refers to such people say or do, and this is the essence of saintliness. Imam Razi رحمه الله عليه, in his *Tafseer-e-Kabeer*, has written the following concerning this Ayat.

This injunction to be with the truthful is directed to come until the Day of Judgment. It also constitutes a promise from Allah Most High that there shall always be true men of Allah among the Muslims, no age shall be void of such pious souls'.

From this Imam Razi further concludes that the consensus of the Muslim Ummah concerning any matter is a valid legal proof, for if there shall always be truthful ones among the Muslims, then it is not possible that the whole community should agree on error for true men of Allah do not fall into error.

It is true that this is an age of deterioration and decline with regard to everything, especially goodness and virtue. Fraud, deceit, ostentation have become rampant whereas originality and authenticity are rare. In the golden era of Islam

there was an abundance of goodness, piety, sincerely and virtue. One would find goodness wherever one turned. Today one has to look hard to find men of Allah, and even then they seem not to be of the same calibre as in the days of the pious ancestors.

Allah Most High however has tremendously increased the reward for enduring all these hardships. In one Hadith has been mentioned that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said: Towards the end of time a person doing good shall get a reward equivalent to fifty men of virtue. The companions asked 'O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a reward equal to fifty men of his times or of our times?' To this the Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied 'No, he shall get a reward equal to fifty of you'. Just think, anyone who remains steadfast in this age of tribulation, anyone who continues to do good shall get a reward equal to fifty Abu Bakrs; Umars and other companions.

The recompense for their efforts has been increased because it has become so difficult to attach oneself to any pious, righteous servant of Allah, and because preserving on goodness has become as difficult as holding burning embers in one's hands.

ONE MORE SATANIC MISGIVING

While looking for a Shaykh the accursed devil again deceives people. He deludes them into thinking that the conditions of the pious ancestors and high-remarking saints of days gone by which are described in various books, are the standard of saintliness even today. So when people begin to look for someone who matches these descriptions and consequently fail in their endeavour, they loose hope and give up all thoughts of self-reform.

The misgiving here is that deterioration and degeneration are unavoidable with the passage of time. The Holy Qur'an and the sacred Ahadith, too, bear witness to this fact. Today neither men like Abu Bakr, Umar or other companions are born. Neither shall there be saints like Junaid or Shibli, nor can one hope to find someone like Maroof Kurkhi or Zun-Noon Misri. Anyone who begins his search with such lofty ideals in his mind will

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surely remain deprived. However if one tries to find someone fulfilling the minimum requirements of saintliness, he then will easily find true men of Allah who have attained spiritual perfection.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A WALIULLAH

The friends of Allah can be recognized by a number of factors:-

1. Basic knowledge of religion, that means as much knowledge as suffices to discharge one's religious obligations, even though such a person be not an attested scholar.
2. Being regular in the observation of one's religious duties, not neglecting any of the Faraaidh and Wajibaat, and abstinence from everything unlawful and in immediate repentance in case one committed a mistake in this regard.
3. Keeping oneself engaged in Divine remembrance whether this consists of reciting various Tasbeehat and Awraad or, if done merely to seek the good will and pleasure of Allah, imparting sermons or writing concerning any religious topic.
4. Having got permission from any Shaykh who himself has attained spiritual perfection to counsel and instruct others with regard to reformation of their inner state.
5. The fifth sign of Waliullah is that if one spends a few days in his company one inclines towards the hereafter and begins to abhor the frivolities of this worldly life.

So if anyone fulfills these criteria, then such a person shall suffice as a spiritual guide and mentor. And if one happens to have found several men matching this description, then one should attach oneself to the one to whom one feels the most attracted.

THE SECOND WAY OF REFORMING ONE'S INNER STATE

If one could not succeed in finding a spiritual mentor who fulfils the criteria above, then according to Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه, such a person should turn to any sincere and well wishing

friends of his, asking them what kind of vices and evil trails perceive in him. Then one should concern oneself with the rectification of the weaknesses pointed out by them.

Once Sayyidina Umar Farooq ؓ approached Sayyidina Salman Farsi ؓ and said to him: 'Your my brother, so tell me what weakness do you see in me?' Sayyidina Salman Farsi ؓ was first reluctant to reply due to his respect for Sayyidina Umar ؓ, but when the latter insisted he said 'I perceive two weaknesses in you, the first is that there is more than one dish on your table cloth. Such was not the habit of Allah's Messenger ﷺ. The second is that you keep one suit of cloths above your requirements, one you wear at night and the other you use during the day.' To this Sayyidina Umar ؓ replied; 'Don't worry, these two shall be remedied right now, *Insha Allah*.

Sayyidina Umar Farooq ؓ and all other pious ancestors of this Ummah were very concerned regarding any weakness of character and they would waste no time in remedying the same. Once a foreign delegation came to meet Sayyidina Umar ؓ. In order to honour the guests the place of assembly was duly made up and decorated. As soon as the formalities were over Sayyidina Umar ؓ picked up a leather-bag, went to a well, fetched water and brought it to an old woman living in his neighbourhood.

When people asked him why he did so he replied that today due to the arrival of the foreign delegation it was necessary to make the court appear grand and splendid, therefore I was worried that this display of pomp and splendour might cause me to develop pride within myself. Therefore I had to do something to humble myself.

This too, was a peculiarity of the noble companions and the pious ancestors of this Ummah, that they would sympathetically point out each others weaknesses and shortcomings, without scorning at each other or hurting each others feelings. Nowadays finding friends like these is not easy, either. If so-called friends perceive a vice in someone they will tell the whole world about it, but not the person

concerned. Such people cannot be considered as friends. One should make sure to befriend only such people who are righteous and sincere.

THE THIRD WAY

To reform one's self with the help of one's adversaries. This may be done by carefully listening of what kind of evil traits and vices one has been accused. Thereafter one ought to do some introspection and analyse one's inner state of being in order to determine how many of those accusations are true and how many of those vices actually exist. Then one should concern oneself with the elimination of those vices. This is what the divines of days bygone used to do. Here comes to my mind an incident concerning a Buzurg of our times, Imam Rabbani Mawlana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi رحمه الله عليه. During his stay in the Khanqah Quddoosi Gangoh when Mawlana Gangohi had begun to deliver discourses on Hadith as well as sermons of reformatory nature during which he would admonish people particularly with regard to Shirk and Bid'at in its various forms and manifestations. Ahmed Reza Khan Bareilvi who was in those days one of the foremost propagators of innovations brought up all kinds of accusations false charges and calumnies against Mawlana Gangohi رحمه الله عليه, using extremely foul language in his various pamphlets and writings. Mawlana Gangohi رحمه الله عليه, had Mawlana Muhammad Bakhsh to read those pamphlets to him, as he had almost lost his eyesight in his old age. Answering of letters and other correspondence was done by his disciple Mawlana Muhammad Yahya Nadwi رحمه الله عليه.

Since these pamphlets comprised most vulgar abuses, malicious propaganda and scandalous accusations it was not easy for the Mawlana to read them out to his Shaykh Mawlana Gangohi رحمه الله عليه. He therefore did not submit those pamphlets to his mentor for a few days. After a couple of days Mawlana Gangohi رحمه الله عليه asked; 'Moulwi Yahya, what's the matter? Does our friend no longer remember us? Since quite some time I have not got any of his pamphlets'. The Mawlana replied: 'Sir,

we have received several of his pamphlets, but when I went through them I found that they contain nothing but abuses and calumnies, so I thought why should I cause you anguish by reading them out to you.' Such were Mawlana's own considerations.

But then there were such pious, noble servants of Allah who had sacrificed all their longings and desires, their honour and esteem for the sake of their Lord and Creator. Mawlana Gangohi رحمه الله عليه said to him: 'Don't do that. Read out to me whatever pamphlet you receive. I want to hear what he writes because may be there is anything true about whatever he charges me with, so I can correct myself.

THE FOURTH WAY

Whenever one perceives some evil or objectionable trait in anyone else, one ought to do some introspection whether this weakness exists within oneself also. And if there be any such apprehension, then one should immediately attempt to correct oneself. This too, is a method of through which one can reform oneself, and as a matter of fact one ought to employ all of the above methods, especially the first one, according to one's best ability.

والله المستعان وعليه التكلان

TYPES OF DESIRES

During the last discourse it was mentioned that inward deeds are of two kinds; virtues (Fadhaail) and vices (Razaail), and a comprehensive list of those inner deeds was provided; the purpose of which was to instill an urge of acquiring virtuous traits and saving oneself from evil traits. Just like a person who intends to perform the prayer is required to purify himself, as without purification his prayer would not be acceptable, a person who intends to acquire virtuous traits must first purify his heart from evil inclinations.

In today's assembly we shall begin to discuss various methods of how to save oneself from vices, the greatest of all vices, rather the root of all vices is to indiscriminately pursue all whims and fancies of one's Nafs. All kinds of evil traits and vices are the outcome of this vice. If a person restrains his desires, causing them to remain within the limits of the Holy Law, then he will be able to rid himself of all vices, and easily acquire traits of virtue. And someone who follows each and every whim of his Nafs, then this unrestrained freedom which his Nafs enjoys shall cause him to drift further and further away from virtues and entangle him in hundreds of vices instead.

This is why in the Holy Qur'an have been mentioned again and again the disastrous outcomes of following of one's base desires, and the essence of all the Holy Prophet's ﷺ teachings is that man is not to follow anything but the guidance sent down to him by his Lord or whatever the Noble Messenger ﷺ instructed him to do. Unrestricted pursuing of one's base desires and inclinations lead to nothing but destruction.

Allamah Shatabbi رحمه الله عليه has, in his book Mawafiqat, concluded after a detailed discussion that the objective of all divinely inspired scriptures and the basis of all prophetic teachings can be named by two words 'Hawa' (i.e. desires) and 'Huda' (i.e. guidance). One must to follow Divine guidance and not give in to follow one's base desires. This is what Islam

is all about. This is the essence of Shariat and Tareeqat fundamental nature and tremendous importance, its fundamental nature and tremendous importance, it is not easy to acquire the same. One must strive hard and subject oneself rigorously to a regimen of spiritual exercises. This invaluable asset of being firm on Divine guidance is not acquired unless through ceaseless striving.

عطار ہو رومی ہو رازی ہو غزالی ہو
کچھ ہاتھ نہیں آتا جز آہ سحر گاہی

'Whether it be Attar or Rumi, Razi or Ghazali nothing is of avail save sighs at the break of the day.'

Only the Prophet ﷺ are exempted from this, for their spiritual perfection is not based on any effort of their own, rather it is a magnificent book from Almighty Allah. But even in their case the ways of the Most High remained unaltered, for they too, had to subject themselves to 'Mujahadaat'. Hafiz Shiraz had once said about Sayyidina Musa ﷺ.

شبان وادی ایمن گئے رسد بمراد
کہ چند سال بجان خدمت شعیب کند

Already months prior to his being granted prophethood the Messenger of Allah ﷺ felt strongly inclined towards secluding himself and worshipping his Lord in the cave of Hira. (Compare from Bukhari Shareef)

There are also some rare instances among the Friends of Allah who received this Divine favour without them having to strive for it.

TWO TYPES OF DESIRE

The honourable Sufis strongly emphasize 'annihilation one's Nafs' and 'opposing its lusts and desires'. People who are not acquainted with these terms tend to take them in their widest sense, they consider these phrases to allude to monasticism and celibacy and therefore criticize the Sufis. But here it ought to be mentioned that desires of one's Nafs are of two types; one is Huqooq-e-Nafs, the second is Huzooz-e-Nafs.

In the first category fall all such desires which are essential for one's subsistence, such as eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, moving, resting, gratifying one's sexual urge. These are the rights of one's Nafs, and discharging the same is not merely permissible but a legal requirement and under certain circumstances it becomes absolutely obligatory to grant one's Nafs its rights. The fulfilment of these rights has been emphasized in the sacred traditions. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said:

و ان لنفسك عليك حقا و ان لعينك عليك حقا و ان لزوجك عليك حقا

'Your Nafs has got a right on you, and your eye has got a right on you (that you grant it some rest by sleeping for some time), and your spouse has got a right on you.

Denying one's Nafs its due rights is monasticism which is foreign to the teachings of Islam. Yes, then there is what is called 'Huzooz-e-Nafs' i.e. all such things which are not essential for survival. And expressions like 'annihilation of one's Nafs' and 'opposing its lusts and desires' refer to all such desires which are over and above one's needs. Man ought to suppress them lest they cause him to cross the limits and fall into sin. And this is not just held by the honourable Sufis, but also in the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger ﷺ there are countless instances corroborating this view. Let me cite just one example.

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

'But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from Lust, Lo! The Garden will be his home.

In the terminology of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah the word 'Hawa' is employed, as opposed to 'Huda' and 'Hawa' refers to all such desires from which one's Nafs derives undue pleasure. In order to save oneself from its dangers one needs to undergo certain forms of spiritual training (Mujahadaat).

is all about. This is the essence of Shariat and Tareeqat fundamental nature and tremendous importance, its fundamental nature and tremendous importance, it is not easy to acquire the same. One must strive hard and subject oneself rigorously to a regimen of spiritual exercises. This invaluable asset of being firm on Divine guidance is not acquired unless through ceaseless striving.

عطار ہو رومی ہو رازی ہو غزالی ہو
کچھ ہاتھ نہیں آتا جز آہ سحر گانی

'Whether it be Attar or Rumi, Razi or Ghazali nothing is of avail save sighs at the break of the day.'

Only the Prophet ﷺ are exempted from this, for their spiritual perfection is not based on any effort of their own, rather it is a magnificent book from Almighty Allah. But even in their case the ways of the Most High remained unaltered, for they too, had to subject themselves to 'Mujahadaat'. Hafiz Shiraz had once said about Sayyidina Musa ﷺ.

شبان وادی ایمن گئے رسد برادر
کہ چند سال بجان خدمت شعیب کند

Already months prior to his being granted prophethood the Messenger of Allah ﷺ felt strongly inclined towards secluding himself and worshipping his Lord in the cave of Hira. (Compare from Bukhari Shareef)

There are also some rare instances among the Friends of Allah who received this Divine favour without them having to strive for it.

TWO TYPES OF DESIRE

The honourable Sufis strongly emphasize 'annihilation one's Nafs' and 'opposing its lusts and desires'. People who are not acquainted with these terms tend to take them in their widest sense, they consider these phrases to allude to monasticism and celibacy and therefore criticize the Sufis. But here it ought to be mentioned that desires of one's Nafs are of two types; one is Huqooq-e-Nafs, the second is Huzooz-e-Nafs.

In the first category fall all such desires which are essential for one's subsistence, such as eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, moving, resting, gratifying one's sexual urge. These are the rights of one's Nafs, and discharging the same is not merely permissible but a legal requirement and under certain circumstances it becomes absolutely obligatory to grant one's Nafs its rights. The fulfilment of these rights has been emphasized in the sacred traditions. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said:

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THE REALITY OF MUJAHADAH

In order to save oneself from sins and unlawful activities it is at times necessary to get oneself used to giving up certain permissible acts as well. This however is not the objective of Mujahadah, once one rests content that one has got control over one's Nafs one may resume these permissible acts. Mujahadaat as practiced by the honourable Sufis include vigil at night, remaining hungry, observing silence, self-imposed isolation and so on.

AN EXAMPLE TO ILLUSTRATE THE REALITY OF MUJAHADA

My respected father Hazrat Mawlana Muhammad Yaseen رحمه الله عليه who was a disciple of Hazrat Mawlana Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi رحمه الله عليه and who acquired further training from Mawlana Muhammad Yaqoob رحمه الله عليه narrates that once Mawlana Muhammad Yaqoob رحمه الله عليه was joking with some children who studied at the Darul Uloom Deoband when he asked him; 'Sir, the pious elders are reported to have strongly emphasized to refrain from excessive talk, what is the real meaning of such statements?' The Mawlana then took a book from my father's hands and bent one of its pages. Then he returned the book and said; 'Straighten this page'. My father tried to straighten it, but it kept on bending. The Mawlana took the book once more and bent that page in the opposite direction. He returned the book and said; Now try again to straighten it.' My father did as directed and now the page remained straight. After this demonstration he said that Mujahadaat like giving up sleep, food, talk and so on are meant to straighten one's Nafs, which is usually not possible unless one turns it in the opposite direction.

One's Nafs will remain content with lawful matters only in case one has for some time deprived it of the same and once it has become accustomed to this hardship it is no longer desirable to deny one's Nafs things which are lawful and permissible, rather one should tame them in a manner approved by the Sunnah of Allah's Final Messenger ﷺ giving due thanks for

these boons along with keeping away from all which is unlawful and prohibited. Attaining this laudable state is the real objective of Mujahadah.

SCHOLARS AND STUDENTS

By studying books of pertaining to the sacred Shariat one can acquire knowledge of what is permissible and what is prohibited, what is praiseworthy and what is abominable, which is a tremendous blessing indeed, but without Mujahada one cannot persevere on putting this knowledge into practice. How apt has Ghalib said;

جاننا ہوں ثواب طاعت و زہد پر طبیعت ادھر نہیں آتی

'I know well the reward for obedience and restraint, yet I feel not inclined towards it.'

Therefore just as it is obligatory to acquire religious knowledge it is necessary to accustom oneself to translating this knowledge into action. This method was adopted by all the learned ones of this Ummat, and also in the near past outstanding scholars like Mawlana Gangohi رحمه الله عليه, Mawlana Nanotwi رحمه الله عليه, Shaykhul Hind رحمه الله عليه, Hakeemul Ummat Mawlana Ashraf ali Thanwi رحمه الله عليه and others whose accomplishments, intellectual as well as practical are known are not the outcome of merely studying various books, rather they are the outcome of Mujahadaat which those noble souls underwent in order to save themselves from following their vain desires. What kinds of Mujahadaat are appropriate in the present age shall Insha-Allah be discussed in near future.

MAQAAM-E-MUHABBAT - THE STATION OF LOVE

عشق ہی زندگی کا سوز عشق ہی زندگی کا ساز

Love for Allah Most High and His Messenger ﷺ is one of those qualities which every believer must strike to acquire.

In the Holy Qur'an is mentioned;

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

Those who believe are stauncher in their love for Allah.

And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يَكُونَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا سِوَاهُمَا (او
کما قال)

'None of you is a believer until Allah and His Messenger ﷺ are dearer to him than anything else'.

From the above quotation is learnt that it is obligatory for every believer to acquire love for Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. Well making high claims of love is easy, but;

وَ كُلٌّ يَدْعَىٰ حُبًّا لِلَّيْلِ وَ لَيْلَى لَا تَقْرِي لَهُمْ بِذَٰكَ

Everyone claims to love Layla. Layla however does not confirm their claims.

One needs to see whether such claims are based on real feelings or not. Love is indicated by total submission and obedience to the beloved;

إِنَّ الْمُحِبَّ لِمَنْ يُحِبُّ مُطِيعٌ

Lo! A lover obediently follows the one whom he loves.

In the Holy Qur'an has been said;

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

Say; if ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you.

But how does one acquire this love? The first step is to empty one's heart from any other love. The honourable Sufis have rightly remarked that the heart is such a vessel in which

two things cannot be combined at a time. Allah Most High has created the heart exclusively for Himself, but when the heart is full of love for this fleeting worldly life, love for wealth and fame, then how could love for Allah occupy one's heart?

Once Hakeemul Ummat Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رحمه الله left the Khanqah and went towards his house. I also happened to go in that direction. While walking he suddenly took a piece of paper and a pencil out of his pocket and wrote something. Then he kept the paper back in his pocket. He asked me; 'Maulvi Shafi, do you know what I just did? I denied, so he went on to explain; 'I have transferred the burden which was on my heart on this piece of paper. I had remembered something I need to do when returning to the Khanqah. Had I not written it down, this matter would have continued to be a burden on my heart. Now I am relieved of this burden. He also said; 'Allah has created the heart only for Himself.

Thus one should use one's heart to remember Allah. There is no harm if at times other matters come to one's mind, but one's thoughts revolve around worldly affairs is wrong. The difference between prophets leaving and people like us is that, although both seemingly engage in worldly affairs, the former are an embodiment of دست بکار و دل بیار. Even while engaged in matters relating solely to this worldly life, their hearts are fully absorbed in Divine remembrance, they never cease to remember their Lord. Our condition on the contrary is such that although we are physically less engaged in worldly affairs, yet these matters constantly preoccupy our hearts and minds.

Once someone had asked Sayyidah Aisha Siddiqah رضي الله عنها about the Holy Prophet's ﷺ domestic life. She said; At home he was like any other man, but yet, while engaging himself in some worldly affair, as soon as he heard the call for prayers;

مَرَّكَانَ لَمْ يَعْرِفْنَا

He went as though he had never known us.

One of the teachers of Imam Abu Dawood رحمه الله was a blacksmith. Whenever he heard the call for prayers he would abandon anything he did, so for that if he had raised his

hammer above his head, he would let the hammer him. He would not delay tolerate the delay caused by a single stroke.

Sayyidina Talha رحمه الله had spent a considerable amount of money on a garden owned by him. Once he visited that garden, and after some time engaged himself in prayers. A sparrow flew past and sought its way out (of the trees); the garden was so dense and the trees so congested that the sparrow could not fly through Sayyidina Talha رحمه الله caught a glimpse thereof, found the sight pleasing and thus his attention was diverted. After concluding his prayer he reproached himself, went to Sayyidina Uthman رحمه الله and said to him; 'This garden distracted me from remembering Allah, I therefore bestow it in charity.' The garden was then sold for nine thousand. (Muwatta Imam Malik)

So the first thing one needs to do in order to acquire love for Allah is to free one's heart from any other love. Besides this one should strive for 'Ma'arifat', i.e. recognition. Love has usually got four causes:

1. Beauty and elegance.
2. Perfection and excellence.
3. Wealth and assets.
4. Generosity and Liberality.

Allah Most High unites these four characteristics to within Himself to such a degree of perfection which can not be found elsewhere. If any of these characteristics are found in any of His creation, then only because it was granted to him by the Almighty. Therefore, rationally speaking, no one deserves to be loved as much as Almighty Allah.

Sayyidina Hassan Basri رحمه الله has said;

مَنْ عَرَفَ اللَّهَ لَمْ يُحِبْ غَيْرَهُ وَمَنْ عَرَفَ الدُّنْيَا زَهَدَ فِيهَا

'Whoever has recognized Allah will not love anyone besides Him and whoever has realized the reality of this worldly life will abstain there from.'

Imam Ghazali رحمه الله has said that each and every particle of the universe is a means to recognize the Ultimate

Truth. No matter at which component of the creation one looks, it testifies to the grandeur and majesty of the Creator.

The third way to acquire love for Allah is to 'Zikr-e-Lisani' if a person frequently remembers Allah, then soon love for Allah shall take foot within one's heart.

While engaged in *Zikr* one should do one's best to concentrate on the sacred phrases uttered by one's tongue. One should not give oneself up to other thoughts. Haji Imdadullah Muhajir Makki رحمه الله عليه has said in this regard that presence of mind and keeping one's heart free from disturbing thoughts are prerequisites of *Sulook*. If without any volition of one's own such thoughts pass one's mind, then there is no harm, but as Mawlana Thanvi رحمه الله عليه has rightly remarked; 'Irrelevant thoughts and concerns play havoc with one's heart.'

Finally one should keep in mind that the actual method of attaining the station of love is to spend a long period of time in the company of the Ahl-Allah. Unless one entrusts oneself to an accomplished Shaykh it is usually not possible to attain this station, because the methods to be employed differ from person to person. Only an accomplished Shaykh is able to assess the temper of another and suggest the method which suits his disciple the most.

THE STATION OF YEARNING AND DELIGHT & CONTENTMENT WITH THE DIVINE DECREE

Shauq-o-Uns, too, belong to those characteristics which a human being must strive to acquire 'Shauq' and 'Uns' are both terms used by Sufis. The former denotes that state in which a human being yearns to acquire some goodness or virtue, and the latter means a person's delight and pleasure concerning a virtue which he has acquired. These two conditions are essential for any human being desirous of reforming himself.

But matters pertaining to the heart are extremely delicate. At time two opposite feelings prevail, and under such circumstances it is very difficult to maintain the right balance. *Shauq*, i.e. yearning to attain some goodness is indeed laudable, but this yearning might as well turn into ungratefulness and envy. As long as a person is only desirous of acquiring some goodness it is alright, but if he crosses the limits, if he begins to lament his fate, then he has become guilty of ingratitude, or, if he cannot bear to see someone else in a good state, then this is 'Hasad', i.e. envy.

Similarly in case a person is pleased with any positive trait or virtue of his which is highly laudable and which is as a matter of fact an indicator of faith. In one Hadith has been stated;

إِذَا سَرَّتْكَ خَيْرَتُكَ وَهَاتَتْكَ سَيِّئَتُكَ فَأَنْتَ مُؤْمِنٌ - (او كما قال)

'If your virtue pleases you and your vice is disliked by you, then you are a believer.

But one must be careful lest the laudable state of 'Uns' turns into 'Ujb', i.e. self conceit, one of the most dangerous vices. In short, one should consider any virtue one has acquired to be a tremendous boon from Almighty Allah. One should think that had Allah not bestowed this virtue on me I would never have been able to acquire it. But if a person considers any virtue to be his personal achievement, and that this virtue indicates his lofty rank and status, then such sentiments are 'Ujb', i.e. self conceit, and such a person has thus spoilt his good deed. The world within, that means

matters pertaining to the heart are extremely delicate. Distinguishing between states and conditions is very difficult and at times the person himself is not aware of the changes taking place. This is why one needs an accomplished Shaykh if one the help of is desirous of reforming oneself without him it is usually difficult to traverse the path to spiritual self realization.

CONTENTMENT WITH THE DIVINE DECREE

Contentment with the Divine Decree is another virtuous trait which one must strive to acquire. This is the very thing which distinguishes a believer from an infidel at the time of affliction, this is the secret force which turns distress and grief into tranquility and peace of mind. It means that a human being is well-pleased and content with whatever the Almighty has decreed for him and that he does not bemoan his fate, nor object to any of Allah's decisions. Rather whatever the circumstances are whether happiness or grief pain or comfort, he keeps in mind that his state is currently the most appropriate for him.

Here one might object that being grieved by any sad event and pleased with any happy occasion is one of the demands of human nature, how can it be possible for anyone in pain and distress to make a display of happiness rather than to sigh and groan, and if anyone would do so then this would other be feigned happiness or revolt against human nature.

This objection may be answered as follows, contentment with the Divine Decree does not mean that one should not be grieved due to grievous circumstances, or that one should be delighted on occasions of grief, it merely means that a person does not object to what has been ordained for him nor lament his fate. Considering pain as pain is not contradictory to contentment with the Divine Decree. Yes, there are some saints who are so overpowered by this sentiment of Rida bil Qada, that at the time of affliction they indeed do not feel any pain or grief. Contentment has become their second nature to such an extent that they derive pleasure and joy even from grievous

occasions. This is due to their being completely overtaken by this state, which is laudable and praiseworthy but not requisite.

Anyway, the actual meaning of Rida bil Qada is that at time of adversity man does not bemoan his fate, that he utters no such words which amount to a complaint, nor that he should entertain any such thoughts. Rather he should keep his tongue moist with praising Allah Most High and giving thanks to Him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has taught us to say the following words at times of sorrow and pain;

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ

Praise be to Allah under all circumstances.

HOW FINE IS THE CONDITION IN WHICH ONE IS KEPT BY ONE'S FRIEND

The rational explanation underlying this doctrine is that man's knowledge is extremely limited. Man is hardly able to discern what befits him and what not. At times he considers something to be good for him, whereas it is not. Or he thinks something to be bad for him and afterwards it turned out to be a blessing in disguise. If one looks around, then there are hundreds of instances to prove what has been mentioned above.

In pre-partition India one man was to catch a train, the Toofan-Mail, from Bareil to some other destination. The train was bound to arrive anytime at night, so that person sat down in the waiting room telling the station master to awaken him when the train comes in case he went to sleep. After some time he dozed off. By chance the station master forgot to awaken him and so the person missed his train. The traveller was infuriated by the station master's neglectfulness, but shortly afterwards he got to know that the train had met a terrible accident. What he thought to be a misfortune, i.e. his missing the train, turned out to be a blessing in disguise. This man was granted a new lease of life, for had he boarded that train he would surely have perished in the accident.

In this case that person came immediately to realize that what he considered to be a misfortune was indeed a source of tremendous good for him, but at times man does not realize the hidden benefits of what is obviously bad or harmful. My son Muhammad Zaki was just a toddler when I saw him having somehow got up the roof of our house, standing right at the edge and peeping down. This was quite dangerous, for if he had leaned only slightly forward he would have fallen down. I thought if I call out to him he might get scared and stumble, so I secretly went up the roof till I was right behind him, grabbed him and pulled him towards myself away from the edge. He fell and started crying. He thought that I had done him a great wrong by pulling him like that. This 'wrong' however had saved his life, but as long as he was a child he was not able to comprehend why his father had done this to him.

So whatever causes no grief in this world, whatever makes us think that we are oppressed, as a matter of fact it is only our ignorance. Our limited understanding which makes us think that way, because all such instances are based on wisdom and are therefore greatly beneficial for us. At times we get to know what good fortune was concealed in an adversity, and at times we don't.

'If man always, keeps in mind how limited his understanding and his awareness are, then he will always remain content with what has been decreed for him, and neither will he feel like complaining to Allah nor to lament his fate.'

The station of contentment with the Divine Decree may be attained by reflecting over events of the kind cited above. Such events which one first thought to be detrimental but which afterwards proved to be of great benefit.

THINGS WHICH RUIN ONE'S HEART

Until now we have discussed all such traits of absolutely obligatory nature which man must strive to attain. The honourable Sufis, refer to such traits as 'Fadhaail' (i.e. virtues). Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه has called them 'Manjiaat' (i.e. things which shall save one.) Such traits which are unlawful are after referred to as Razaail (i.e. vices) Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه has termed them 'Mahlikaat' (i.e. things leading to one's destruction).

The essence of the path to spiritual self realization is based on two things, acquiring Fadhaail which is known as 'Tahliya' among the Sufis and eliminating Razaail which is called 'Takhliya'. The Shaykhs of Tasawwuf hold different opinions regarding whether Tahliya should precede Takhliya, or vice versa. Some hold that a novice, i.e. a person who has only recently embarked on the spiritual path should first direct his efforts towards 'Takhliya', that means he should first try to cleanse his heart of vices and contaminants which would result in his ruin. Thereafter the acquisition of virtues would become easy. According to them the case of a novice can be compared to a farmer who is desirous of cultivating his land, as long as he does not prepare the soil, remove weeds and stones and level the ground his efforts will be in vain. Only if he has made all the necessary preparations, the seed sown by him will develop into strong, healthy plants. Similarly is the case of someone who wishes to turn his heart into a flower bed of virtues. As long as he does not eliminate the weeds and stones (i.e. vices) from his heart, the seeds of virtue will not sprout. Other hold that the acquisition of virtues ought to precede the elimination of vices. They say that vices are like darkness and virtues are like light. So anyone who wishes to remove darkness will have to bring in some light. Once he does so the darkness will be gone. So if the heart is illuminated by virtue the darkness of vice will disappear on its own.

Anyway, these two methods of reformation are employed

by the Sufis. Those who hold that Tahliya ought to be preceded by Takhliya do not prescribe any Awraad or Wazaaif (i.e. routine set of recitals) in the beginning. Rather they emphasize the need for such Mujahadaat which are instrumental in overpowering one's Nafs. On the other hand those who hold that Takhliya ought to be precedent give more importance to Zikr, Tasbeehat, Awraad and Wazaaif. It is up to the Shaykh to decide which of these two methods is likely to benefit his disciple the most.

THE ROOT OF ALL VICES

So far we had talked only about virtues, now let us briefly discuss vices. But before we do so you must understand it well that the main cause of all spiritual ailments is following the lusts and passions of one's Nafs, which has been called 'Itteba-e-Hawa' in the Holy Qur'an. No matter kind of spiritual ailment, if one takes a closer look at it one comes to realize that it is the outcome of man's allowing himself to be overcome by his base desires. If man learns to completely control his Nafs, then neither will he commit any sin, nor will he develop any spiritual ailment. This is why in the Holy Qur'an and the sacred Ahadith it has been stressed again and again not to follow blindly one's lusts and passions.

Says Allah Most High;

لَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

'And follow not your desire lest it causes you to stray from your path.'

So anyone who wishes to thoroughly cleanse his heart, to rid it of all spiritual ailments, to eliminate all its vices must first of all manage to keep his Nafs under control. If one ponders over the matter then one arrives at the conclusion that in the Holy Qur'an are mentioned three methods of how to overcome one's Nafs. One mentioned is of very general and comprehensive nature, the other two are more specified and detailed. The first method is to develop concern for the hereafter and to keep in mind that one day one will be called to account for all one's deeds. In the Glorious Qur'an has been

stated;

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

'But as for him who feareth to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust. Lo! The Garden shall be his home.'

From this Ayat is learnt that one way to keep one's Nafs in control is to instill fear of being answerable to Allah for all one's doings in one's heart. Well, every Muslim knows that one day he will have to present himself in the Divine Court but just as this is certain, this reality frequently tends to escape our sight. So in order to overcome one's Nafs it is necessary to remind oneself again and again thereof. One must always remain conscious of the fact that one day one will have to stand before Allah, and this may be achieved by meditating over death. Everyone should spare five or ten minutes so that at least once a day he may think about death and the Hereafter. Remembrance of death should become an integral part of one's daily routine. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said;

اَكْثَرُوا ذِكْرَ هَازِمِ اللَّذَاتِ

'Remember frequently the thing which sets an end to all pleasures.' (i.e. death)

Remembering death is one device to instill fear of Allah in one's heart and to develop concern for the Hereafter, which in turn makes it easier to control one's passions and desire.

This is the general approach to overcome one's vain desires and lusts. Blindly following the whims and fancies of one's Nafs results in two kinds of error, Shubhaat i.e. erroneous notions, doubts and misgivings concerning theoretical matters, and 'Shahwaat', i.e. wrong, erroneous actions and deeds.

The Holy Qur'an has prescribed the following remedy for the first kind of error;

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ

And exhort one another to truth.

And the second remedy is:

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

And exhort one another to endurance.

'Sabr' means to bear patiently the agony and pain which resisting one's Nafs might cause, a characteristic which is usually not attainable without the company of the righteous bondmen of Allah. This is why the honourable Sufis consider one's an accomplished Shaykh to be a pre-requisite on one's way towards spiritual self realization and reform. In the Holy Qur'an has been mentioned;

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

'O ye who believe! Fear Allah and be with the truthful ones.'

From this Ayat is learnt that the company of the righteous and pious is one way to acquire 'Taqwa' and to gain control over one's Nafs.

DISASTERS CAUSED BY THE TONGUE

In one Hadith the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reported to have said;

جَرْمُهُ صَغِيرٌ وَجَرْمُهُ كَبِيرٌ

'It is small in size (lit, its body is small) but it commits great sins.'

And indeed, there seems to be no other organ committing as many and as grave sins as this tongue. Once Sayyidina Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ was seen taking hold of his tongue and twisting it. When asked why he was doing this he said;

إِنَّ هَذَا أَوْرَدَنِي الْمَوَارِدَ

This thing has caused me much trouble.

Many sins committed by the tongue are such that every one knows them to be sins, e.g. telling lies, back biting, abusive and foul language, singing songs, and so forth. Every Muslim knows that these things are prohibited. If anyone happens to commit any of these acts, knowing them to be sins, he will soon regret his deed and he hopes that in future he will be able to abstain from it. But sometimes very serious offences are committed by the tongue which are hardly ever considered to be sins. And if a patient is not aware of his ailment, then how could one expect him to recover? This is why these offences are so very dangerous and destructive. Today therefore we shall discuss some of these sins.

MEANINGLESS TALK

The tongue and our ability to speak are a great boon which Almighty Allah has bestowed on us so that we may use it to improve our religious and worldly affairs. But if we use this boon in a manner which benefits us in neither way, then we have made inappropriate use thereof, and this is something which Islam teaches us to avoid. Engaging in superfluous, meaningless talk is nothing but detrimental. This is the reason why in one tradition has been said about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ

كَانَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَزَرَ الْكَلَامَ طَوِيلَ الصَّمْتِ

'He ﷺ used to talk little and observe long periods of silence.'

Imam Abu Hanifa رحمه الله عليه got the following engraved on his ring;

قُلِ الْخَيْرُ وَالْإِفَاصِمَتِ

Say something good or else remain quiet.

Hazrat Maulana Syed Asghar Hussain Sahib رحمه الله عليه (who was also called Hazrat Mian Sahib) was a man of extraordinary spiritual qualities, and I was blessed with his loving affection. One day I presented myself to him and he said; 'Today let us talk in Arabic.' This rather amazed me because he had never before expressed such a desire. He then himself stated the reason why he wished to converse in Arabic. He said, Neither you nor I are able to speak Arabic fluently and freely, so we will talk less. He then continued; 'Our case is like that of a traveller whose money is about to finish so he spends every penny very carefully.'

USELESS ARGUMENTS

This too is a form of meaningless talk and people of knowledge are most likely to get involved in such discussions, debates and arguments which are of no benefit at all. Arguments which are meant to ascertain the truth, which are peculiar to students and seekers of knowledge, are no doubt permissible, rather desirable. There is a Persian saying according to which;

”طالب علم کے چوں و چرا نہ کند و صوفی کے چوں و چرا کند ہر دو را بہ چراگاہ باید رفت“

I am however talking about useless arguments which do not benefit anyone.

Once two gentlemen had travelled all the way from Balkh to Delhi in order to acquire spiritual knowledge from Hazrat Nizamuddin Awliya رحمه الله عليه.

When they had finally reached their destination and the time for prayers had come, they sat down at the pond of the mosque to perform ablution. They started talking about the

pond, comparing it to that in Balkh and finally broke out into an argument which of the two ponds is bigger. This continued for quite some time. Nizamuddin Awliya رحمه الله عليه was informed about this, and after the prayer, when the two presented themselves to him he asked; 'did you come to a conclusion? Which of the two ponds is bigger? When both of them remained silent, Nizamuddin Awliya رحمه الله عليه told them; 'Return to your hometown. Your cure lies in your measuring both ponds and settle this argument of yours. Then we can see further.'

This malady has reached epidemic proportions. People lack even the most basic knowledge of religion, but at the very first opportunity they get themselves involved in all sorts of futile, useless arguments and debates.

Whenever a question of this kind is submitted to me, I write in return the following Hadith;

مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُهُ

The virtue of a person's Islam consists of his giving up what is of no benefit to him.

MUTUAL QUARRELS AND DEBATES

Permissible and useful discussions might easily turn into another disaster, namely mutual quarrels and debates.

Nowadays any discussion, no matter how scholarly is not considered as such until the participants debase, defame and insult each other, turning this discussion into a warfare of words. All sorts of 'civilized abuses' are employed to achieve this end, and this activity is considered as an art, and that although Imam Malik رحمه الله عليه has said;

المرء في العلم يذهب بنور الإيمان

'Debates concerning a point of religious knowledge destroy the radiance of faith.'

Someone had asked; 'What if one sees a person doing something not approved by the Sunnah?' — 'He let him amicably explain the matter to him and avoid debating and quarrelling' was the reply.

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And indeed, such controversies result in hurting the feelings of another Muslim. This is one evil thereof; besides this however a far greater mischief lies hidden in this activity, namely that it sows discord among the Muslims, leading to their splitting up in many sects and groups, each having insurmountable feelings of prejudice and bias for the other. If such debates would be conducted in a purely academic manner, then, I am convinced, they might be instrumental in overcoming the differences which have cropped up among the Muslims.

MUJAHADAH

In an issue of 'Al-Balagh' (Jamadi-us-Sani 1387 A.H) was mentioned that human desires are of two types; Huqooq-e-Nafs and Huzooz-e-Nafs. Huqooq-e-Nafs are all such desires on which one's subsistence depends, such as food, drink, sleeping, waking, movement, rest, fulfilling one's sexual desires as per requirement, these all are the rights of one's Nafs, and granting it these rights is not merely permissible but at times absolutely obligatory. Curtailing these rights in one way or the other amounts to monasticism which is contrary to the teachings of Islam.

Desires of the second type are called 'Huzooz-e-Nafs' which refers to all such things from which the Nafs derives pleasure and which are not essential for one's survival, which are over and above what one requires to sustain oneself. When the pious Sufis talk about 'opposing one's Nafs' or 'eliminating one's Nafs' they imply to give up such pleasures, which means that man should not become addicted to such superfluous sensual delights. The Holy Qur'an alludes to this very concept;

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

'But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust Lo! The Garden will be his home.'

The term 'Hawa' used in the Holy Qur'an, as opposed to 'Huda' refers to all such desires which fall in the category of Huzooz-e-Nafs, and in order to keep away from the same, one has to resort to 'Mujahadaat' and 'Riyadhaat'.

'Mujahadah' implies that in order to save oneself from sin and impermissible acts one must at times get used to giving up permissible acts. Such Mujahadaat are not an end in themselves, rather once one is confident that one's Nafs has been subdued, one should give them up.

In the words of Mawlana Gangohi رحمه الله عليه, the example of *Mujahadah* is like that of a sheet of paper the corner of which is bent. No matter how much one tries, it is not possible to

straighten the sheet until one bends the corner towards the other direction. Likewise the objective of Mujahadah is to rectify one's Nafs, to ensure it does not swerve from the lawful. But if the Nafs is accustomed to what is unlawful, then it is not possible to restrict it to lawful matters only, unless, for some time, one makes it abstain from what is lawful, too. This is why Sayyidina Umar Farooq رضي الله عنه had said;

تَرَكْنَا تِسْعَةَ أَغْشَارِ الْحَلَالِ خَشْيَةَ الْحَرَامِ

'We had given up nine tenth of what is lawful, fearing lest we get involved in something unlawful.'

And this is in fact a practical interpretation of a Hadith in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said;

الْحَلَالُ بَيِّنٌ وَالْحَرَامُ بَيِّنٌ وَبَيْنَهُمَا مُشْتَبِهَاتٌ وَمَنْ حَالَ حَوْلَ الْحَمِيِّ
أَوْشَكَ أَنْ يُوقَعَ فِيهِ (أو كما قال ﷺ)

'The lawful has been made clear and the unlawful has been made clear and in between lie the doubtful matters. And whoever roams around a pasture is likely to trespass.'

It has been observed that one gets regular and punctual in performing the prayer with congregation (in a way as to miss not even the first *Takbeer*) only if one gets into the habit of offering the Tahiyatul Masjid. So if any one accustoms himself to offering Tahiyatul Masjid (which is a purely superogatory prayer) in order to become regular and punctual in the congregational prayer, then this is Mujahadah. Similarly if someone talks less for the sake of saving himself from saying anything unlawful, then this, too, is Mujahadah. In the days of yore the honourable Sufis underwent very rigorous and difficult Mujahadaat to attain this very end. These spiritual exercises can be classified as follows:-

1. Tark-e-Ta'am (i.e. giving up food)
2. Tark-e-Manaam (i.e. giving up sleep)
3. Tark-e-Kalaam (i.e. observing silence)
4. Tark-e-Ihtilaat ma'al Anaam (i.e. not meting with people unless unavoidable)

MUJAHADAH IN OUR TIME

Nowadays however we lack the strength to endure such rigors. This is the reason why Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has, substituted 'Tark' (i.e. complete abstinence from something) with 'Taqleel' (i.e. reduction of something). He says that if nowadays we were to give up food and sleep completely, then this would negatively affect our health, and in turn, instead of benefiting us such Mujahadaat might harm us. Therefore it is advisable to reduce those things instead of giving them up completely.

He then continues that he does not particularly emphasize reducing one's intake of food or periods of sleep, for even a Shaykh experiences difficulties in setting limits suiting the individual and at times, if one be not fully aware of an individual condition such restrictions might cause his health to deteriorate.

Mawlana Thanwi رحمة الله عليه however stressed two other forms of Mujahadah, i.e. talking less and mixing less with people. So any one who desires to reform himself needs to undergo these two forms of Mujahadah.

This kind of Mujahadah has been practised ever since. Imam Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه for example got the following engraved on his ring;

قل الخير والافاضمت

Say what is good or else remain silent.

Two contradictory statements have been reported from Sufyan Thawri رحمة الله عليه namely;

اقلل من معرفة الناس

Acquaint yourself less with the people.'

And:

اكثر من معرفة الناس

Acquaint yourself more with the people.

But in reality these two statements do not contradict each other, for in the first reference is made to such people who are negligent of 'Deen' whereas in the second sentence he refers to

such people who are firmly on the right path and who work towards strengthening their relation with Allah Most High.

ONE IMPORTANT POINT

Here one thing needs to be remembered, namely that no doubt mixing less with people is a significant constituent of Mujahadah, but under no circumstances should one intend to keep away from people because they are 'bad'. Such notions are nothing but pride and arrogance. Rather one should think that one's own actions are evil, that one is spiritually sick and that one needs to keep away from others lest they, too, get negatively affected. On the other hand someone who thinks lowly of others, who holds them to be wicked and evildoers and therefore avoids associating with them, then someone's roaming around in the markets is far superior to such arrogance.

Anyway, once one got into the habit of speaking less and mixing less with the people one will not only have far more free time to spend but moreover one will Insha Allah be saved from many sins. After 'Mujahadah', which steps need to be taken towards reform? This we shall elucidate Insha Allah in near future.

THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS REFORM REPENTANCE

صد بار اگر توبہ شکستی باز آ

Anyone who desires to reform his world within, to be cured from his spiritual ailments and as a result thereof to attain the good will and pleasure of Almighty Allah and to remain immune against the punishment of Hell, needs to take the first step on this path, repentance. Therefore, in today's gathering we shall discuss some essential matters pertaining to repentance.

People usually think that repentance means nothing but reciting some phrases like; استغفر الله ربی من کل ذنب و اتوب الیه This however is a grave misunderstanding. Repentance requires a person to sincerely regret one's past misdeeds, to think how one might make up for one's trespasses and, for the future, to do one's utmost not to commit these sins again.

Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه has explained this matter beautifully. He says that in this world both goodness and evil can be found, and likewise there are many things inviting one to do good and others luring one into evil and transgression, many things cause an inclination towards virtue and again, many things in still an urge to commit one sin or the other. What one has to do is to subdue one's urge to sin and to let one's inclination to goodness prevail.

Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه continues that the example of man is like that of gold mixed with ore. So obviously the gold cannot be put to any use as long as the ore is not separated from it, and the only way to do so is to heat this mixture in the fire.

Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه explains in order to separate virtue from vice in man, one too, needs heat. This heat which purifies man from the one of vice is of two types; One is the fire of Hell, because the fire of Hell, in case of believer, is in fact a means of purifying him from ore. Merely burning him is not the end in

itself, rather the object is to admit him into paradise once he has been purified. Infidels however are thrown into Hell and they are to abide therein forever. In the Holy Qur'an has been state 1;

وَهَلْ نُجَازِي إِلَّا الْكَفُورَ

'Punish We ever any save the disbelievers?'

The second type of heat is that of woe and regret. The flames thereof are such that they cause the ore of evil to melt away already in this worldly life.

Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه further states that man, in order to be thoroughly cleansed must be burnt by either flame. Now the decision is up to him. If he thinks himself too weak to undergo the chastisement of Hell fire, which indeed is beyond endurance, then there is no other way for him but to stir up the flame of regret in his heart, the name of which is 'Tawbah' (i.e. repentance). In one Hadith has been stated:

اتِّمَّا التَّوْبَةُ النَّدَامَةُ

Repentance means regret.

THREE DEGREES OF REPENTANCE

Now one might ask how to develop regret? The answer to this is 'through knowledge'. As long as a human being does not know that he has committed a mistake, he will not feel sorry for it. If a person has eaten something not knowing that it was poison then how could he ever regret it? He can regret only once he comes to know that the thing he had was poisonous and that it might prove fatal for him.

Similarly, as long as a person does not know that he has done something evil, that he has done something impermissible, something which might land him in Hell, he will not feel sorry for his trespass. Therefore, the first thing one needs to do in order to stir up the flames of regret is to acquire knowledge of what is sinful, one must know a sin to be a sin indeed, and this knowledge should not be merely of a formal nature, rather it should be such as to develop within one's heart concern for the Hereafter, it should in still fear of the

Almighty, and it should cause the abhorrence of sin to outweigh its attractiveness and pleasure.

This is why, in the Holy Qur'an, knowledge has been named as indicator for fear of Allah;

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

'The knowledgeable among His bondsmen fear Allah alone.

Someone who does not fear the Almighty Lord nor worry about the Hereafter, someone who is not absolutely convinced of the evil consequences of sin, is not a person of knowledge, he is a most miserable ignoramus. How apt has Maulana Rumi رحمه الله عليه said;

جانِ جملہ علم ہا این است و این
کہ بدانی من کیم در یومِ دین

As long as one does not believe firmly that sins, no matter how alluring they seem to be, are in fact embers of fire, one is, according to the terms of the Holy Qur'an, not a person of knowledge. Such knowledge can be acquired through pondering over the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, striving to always keep in mind the evil consequences and punishment for sin until such reflections have penetrated each and every sphere of one's mind. Shaykh Ibn Hajar Hashami has prepared an index of sins in which about three hundred major sins have been mentioned. The Urdu translation of this compilation has been printed, too. Hafiz Zainuddin Najaim and Hafiz Hajar Asqalani رحمه الله عليه also have compiled books on this subject, and Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمه الله عليه has written a book in Urdu entitled 'Jazaa-e-A'maal' in which he elucidates this particular subject. Studying these books shall prove tremendously useful in acquiring this said knowledge.

After acquiring the necessary knowledge follows the second degree, i.e. regret. Obviously, once someone has learnt about and is fully convinced of the evil consequences of certain impermissible acts, then if he has happened to commit any

such act in the past, he will feel remorse and deeply regret what he has done.

Thereafter comes the third degree, namely that of 'reparation'. For this one needs to do two things;

1. Intending firmly not to commit sins in future.
2. Trying to make up for whatever sins one has committed in the past. If these sins pertain to the right of men (Huqooqul Ibad) then one should either attempt to restore these rights, e.g. if someone has usurped a person's wealth, then he should return it, if someone has hurt a person physically or verbally, then he should either let the other take revenge or ask him for forgiveness and so forth.

And if one's sins pertain to the rights of Allah (*Huqooq Ullahi*) then if that is possible, one should make up for one's shortcomings either through Qaza or Kaffarah, e.g. if someone has failed to offer his prayers or to keep the prescribed fast, then he should compensate for them and if he has made an oath or vow and then became forsworn, he should expiate for his vow.

And if one's sin be such that it is not possible to make up for it through Qaza or Kaffarah then one must with utmost humility ask Allah Most High for forgiveness.

All these points were strongly emphasized by Mawlana Thanwi رحمه الله عليه. At the time of repentance he enjoined his disciples to do their utmost to atone for their past sins.

If someone repents in this manner, then according to Maulana Thanwi رحمه الله عليه a person can be transformed into an accomplished saint in the wink of an eye, because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said;

التَّائِبُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ كَمَنْ لَا ذَنْبَ لَهُ

'Someone who repents from a sin is as though he has not committed any sin.'

The door to repentance remains open for everyone who wishes to enter it until one is about to breathe one's last, but

repentance shall not be accepted once the death rattle starts in one's throat.

PATIENCE AND TYPES OF PATIENCE

The next step after repentance is that one thinks about how to reform one's inward and outward life, which means that one must do whatever Allah Most High has bid one to do and refrain from all which He has bid one to refrain from. Commandments pertaining to one's outward life are called 'Mamuraat', e.g. prayers, fast and so on and those things from which one must refrain are called 'Munhiyyat', e.g. theft, drinking alcohol and so on. 'Mamuraat' and 'Munhiyyat' are the subject of Fiqh and are therefore not part of our discussion.

But then there are some inward actions which were enjoined on us and some which were made unlawful for us. In the terminology of Tasawwuf inward actions of the first type are known as 'Fadhaail' and those of the second type are known as 'Razaail'. We shall first discuss 'Fadhaail', thereafter 'Razaail'.

One more point to mention is that once a person has become so accustomed to a virtue that it has become his second nature, then, in the terms of Tasawwuf, this is called 'Maqaam'. So if we say that such and such has reached Maqaam-e-Sabr, then this means that the virtue of patience has thoroughly penetrated each sphere of his being.

In today's assembly we shall explain a few important matters concerning 'Sabr', i.e. patience the literal meaning of 'Sabr' is restraint and in the terminology of Islam it means to restrain oneself from impermissible acts.

And from this learnt that the real scope of 'Sabr' (acc. to the terminology of the Holy Qur'an and Islam) exceeds that of 'Sabr' in common parlance, i.e. being patient when faced with an affliction, not raising a hue and cry. In fact 'Sabr' is a very comprehensive term, permeating almost every branch of religion. This is why in the Holy Qur'an hardly anything has been stressed as much as the acquisition of 'Maqaam-e-Sabr' and there is hardly anything rewarded more than 'Sabr'. It is

stated in the Holy Qur'an;

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

'and exhort one another to truth and exhort one another to patience.'

And;

إِنَّمَا يُؤْفَى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

Lo! Those who are patient shall be rewarded without any measure.

Some further details are required. In order to understand the importance of 'Sabr' as mentioned above.

You all know that Allah Most High has given man knowledge of and ability to do good and evil. In the Glorious Qur'an has been mentioned;

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا

'And (Allah) inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it.'

And since the purpose of temptations in this worldly life is to make man reject what is wrong and opt for what is right, has Allah Ta'ala provided man with certain means to strengthen his powers to do good or bad deeds. One inner force which is supposed to make a person incline to virtue is called 'Nafs Lawwamali', more commonly known as 'conscience'. Whenever someone intends to commit an evil act some invisible force tries to prevent him from doing so. This force is 'Nafs Lawwamali'. Besides there are some external forces at work, trying to make a person incline towards virtue, namely the angels, who are Allah's obedient and submissive creation. They were created without any inclination to sin.

On the other side there are certain forces trying to make a person incline towards evil. One such internal force is called Nafs Ammarah. This is the source of a human being's base desires which lures one away from goodness and virtue and causes one to incline towards vice. The other force are the 'Shayateen' whose very purpose of life is to keep humans away from virtue and instigate them to sin.

The of these two opponent forces are nothing but a means to tempt, to try fully must let his inclination to do good overcome his urge to do evil, and this, in the terms of the Holy Law, is called 'Sabr'.

This station is not attained through mere lip-service, rather one must work very hard for it. Most Mujahadaat are prescribed by the honourable Sufis for this purpose, i.e. in order to attain this station. About a number of Sufi-saints it has been narrated that at times they even gave up permissible matters. The reason for this is not that they thought these things to be unlawful, rather they did so in order to overcome their base desires.

In the beginning it is very hard to suppress one's base desires, but once one had the first draught of this oh so bitter medicine, Allah Most High makes things easy for His bondmen, so far that one's rebellious Nafs becomes 'Nafs Mutmainnah' that means one's Nafs feels so much attracted to virtue and goodness as though its evil element had ceased to exist.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has described this condition as follows:

مَنْ يَتَصَبَّرْ يَصْبِرْهُ اللَّهُ

'Allah grants patience to him who wishes to reach the station of patience.'

And about him who has acquired this tremendous boon the Messenger of Allah has said;

لَمْ يَزَلْ أَحَدٌ نِعْمَةً أَوْسَعُ مِنَ الصَّبْرِ (او كما قال عليه السلام)

No one was given any greater blessing than Sabr.

The best way to attain this station is to associate with such people who themselves have acquired the blessing of patience. Experience has shown that nothing influences a human being more than his environment and the people who surround him. If therefore someone spends his time in the company of the Sabireen, such who are patient, then sooner or later he himself will become 'Sabir' i.e. patient.

Then there is one more way to attain the station of patience, namely whenever one feels inclined to commit any sin, then one should recall the punishment for this sin which is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and the sacred Ahadith. Along with that one should remember death the horrors of the grave and accountability in the Hereafter. This is the reason why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has enjoined;

اكثروا ذكر هاذم اللذات

Remember often that thing which brings an end to all pleasures (i.e. death).

Those people on whom Allah Most High has bestowed the blessing of 'Sabr', those whose inclination to virtue has overcome their urge to sin, even they must not become careless. Maulana Thanwi رحمه الله عليه had enjoined on his Khulefaa never to become neglectful of reforming themselves. Once when addressing his Khulefaa he narrated them a story from the Masnawi of Maulana Rumi رحمه الله عليه about a wood-cutter who went to the forest every day early in the morning and in the evening he would return with a load of wood. One day he had packed in his bundle a snake stiff with cold. On the whole way back to his home it seemed as though the snake was dead, for it did not make a single move. But once the wood-cutter had reached his home the snake began to warm up, the more it warmed up the more it moved until it posed a serious threat to the poor wood-cutter's life.

Mawlana Rumi رحمه الله عليه says that the case of Nafs Ammarah is not different from that of a snake stiff with cold. It is not dead, just temporarily benumbed:

نفس اژدها است او کے مردہ است
از غم بے آلتی افردہ است

Therefore one must always be on the watch. After narrating this story Hazrat Thanwi رحمه الله عليه went on telling his Khulefaa that he is addressing not only them but also his own self and that by the grace of Allah he himself acts accordingly. Then he went over to his desk, took out some

sheets of paper containing some instructions, showed them to his audience and then said 'Whatever weakness I perceive within myself, their remedy is written on those papers.

On the contrary, if someone makes no efforts to attain Maqaam-e-Sabr, then his base desires will play havoc on him, rendering him completely helpless. Obviously, this is the most dangerous thing that can happen to a believer.

In one Hadith has been mentioned that if a believer commits a sin, then a black spot settles on his heart. Now if a person does nothing about it, rather continues to commit one sin after the other, then soon his heart will be completely blackened and once a person reaches this stage, he has become so accustomed to sin and his conscience has grown so weak that nothing seems to be sinful to him any longer.

This can be compared to a clean piece of cloth which has been soiled a bit. Such a stain will be easily detected and one will attempt to remove it as soon as possible. But if that piece of cloth is already dirty, if there are many stains on it, then one will not care much about one more stain and neither will one feel any particular urge to remove it. Likewise if one does not remove the black spot which has settled on one's heart with repentance and if one does not resort to 'Sabr' as a precautionary measure, then one's soul will get darker and darker. This has been referred to as 'rust of the heart' in the sacred Ahadith.

Those who by the Grace of Allah are truly desirous of reforming must make sure that their Nafs holds on tightly to 'Sabr' lest it gets accustomed to sins. Once Maulana Thanwi رحمه الله عليه received a letter which bore a ticket but no stamp Hazrat Thanwi رحمه الله عليه tore this letter into pieces, threw it and said; 'In spite of the government unjustifiedly extracting large sums of money from the people and in spite of, seen purely from the legal point of view it being lawful for us to take what would rightfully be ours in this manner, yet I do not like to resort to such methods for this is how one's Nafs gets into the evil habit of making up excuses.

MAQAAM-E-SHUKR THE STATION OF GRATITUDE

شکر نعمت ہائے تو چنداں کہ نعمت ہائے تو

After the station of 'Sabr' it is incumbent to attain what is called 'Maqaam-e-Shukr', i.e. the station of gratitude. If you have read the Holy Qur'an, then you have come across many verses in which man was ordered to be grateful. In today's gathering we shall therefore briefly discuss what is meant by 'Shukr' and how to attain this station. The reality of 'Shukr' is to acknowledge the blessings of one's true benefactor in a way which engenders love for him within one's heart as well as a desire to obey him. Thus it can be said that 'Shukr' consists of three elements:

- 1) To acknowledge that Allah is the one who has conferred on me whatever blessing I enjoy and that He has done so out of His infinite bounty and grace.
- 2) It is Allah who has showered me with His bounties and blessings and that therefore nothing in the world should be dearer to me than Him.
- 3) Since Allah has, in His infinite kindness bestowed so many blessings on me I ought to spend my life in obedience to Him alone and no one else, In other words, whatever blessing I have received from my Lord, I ought to utilize it in a manner which is pleasant to Him and not in a manner which is disliked by Him.

If these feelings have fully penetrated a person's heart then, this is referred to as his having attained *Maqaam-e-Shukr*.

Then, in order to attain this station, one must focus on the first of its three elements, for once one has come to realize how many blessings Allah Ta'ala showers on us every single moment of our lives, this necessarily results in loving Him and our desire to live in obedience to Him. So if anyone feels that his love for the Almighty or the desire to obey Him are

somewhat insufficient, then the reason for this is that the person concerned has not fully realized and acknowledged Allah's bounties.

Consider the following case, there is a stranger who helps you out of every difficulty. If you need money he somehow arranges it for you, if you are sick he provides you with the most effective medical treatment, if you are unemployed he helps you to get a decent job, in short, he is there for you to help and support you, whenever you need him. No matter how stonehearted you might be, yet the love for your benefactor will penetrate your heart and if he might ask you to do something, you surely will comply with pleasure. From this is learnt that if one fully realizes and acknowledges how many boons one receives from one's benefactor, one will begin to love him and will want to spend one's life in obedience to him. So in order to attain the station of gratitude, one must first of all become and remain conscious of Allah's countless blessings.

Anyone who is somewhat inclined to religion believes that all goodness comes from the Almighty alone but in order to attain the station of gratitude it is necessary that such considerations become so deeply rooted in one's mind that one does not become oblivious thereof for even the wink of an eye, in other words, one has become so convinced of this fact that one requires no further arguments as proof rather even at times of pain and distress one does not lose sight of the countless blessings which one enjoys every single second.

A person who has not attained 'Maqaam-e-Shukr' will strongly perceive any kind of pain and distress, whereas he turns almost blind to what ever blessings are conferred on him, that means because of one thing that troubles him he becomes oblivious his being surrounded by hundreds of blessings, focusing only on the single discomfort. On the other hand, someone who has attained Maqaam-e-Shukr' is able to witness all the blessings he enjoys, no matter how much he might suffer, yet he is convinced that the blessings far out weigh his misery, and that is why instead of sighs and complaints he will utter words of gratitude.

Mawlana Syed Asghar Hussain رحمه الله عليه who was also known as 'Mian Sahib' was my patron and teacher. Once he was suffering from very high fever, so I went to visit him and enquire about his health. He was nearly delirious lying on his bed. The fever had reached its climax due to which he again and again become unconscious. When he had regained consciousness, I greeted him and asked him how he was. He spontaneously replied, 'Alhamdulillah! Alhamdulillah! I am fine. Thank God I have a healthy heart, my kidneys do not hurt either, nor do I have any pain in my chest. Each and every of my limbs and organs functions well. I just have got fever.' This is the effect of Maqaam-e-Shukr that in spite of high fever, in spite of being almost delirious, one realizes that although one has to endure some pain, yet at the same time one enjoys countless blessings. And indeed it is just as Mian Sahib had said, 'Fever is no doubt a painful condition, but still there are countless blessings, eyes to see, a tongue to speak, ears to hear, hands to grasp; doctors, physicians for medical treatment, many friends and relatives to wait on me. Then I just suffer from fever, my heart, brain, chest, kidneys, none of them is afflicted by their respective ailment.'

This is no doubt true, but under such circumstances usually a person becomes oblivious of all those blessings, focusing on nothing but his suffering from fever. Only such people on whom Allah Ta'ala has bestowed are able to comprehend this.

Now how to attain this blessed state? Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه has stated that in order to acquire this bounty one ought to reflect frequently about Allah's blessings. Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه has, in his work 'Ihya Uloom-id-Deen' mentioned quite in detail those blessings, and if one was to reflect over them it is quite possible for one to attain 'Maqaam-e-Shukr'. Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه further states that blessings are of two types, such which are peculiar to an individual, e.g. being an outstanding scholar, owning a well built house, having virtuous offspring, being liked by the people and so forth. The second type of blessings are of a common nature, they can be enjoyed

by anyone at any time, such as the moon, stars, air, fire, water, earth, forests, mountains, parts of the body like eyes, ears, nose, hands, feet and so on. If one seriously ponders over all those blessings and the wisdom behind them, then it is simply impossible not to attain 'Maqaam-e-Shukr', for Allah Ta'ala has granted us all these blessings without being asked for them. No one had to exert himself in order to acquire them, nor did anyone have to pay for them.

This is why man does not consider those things to be a blessing, or if he does, he just casts a glance at them and passes by. Has it never come to anyone's mind that if only one of those blessings would sized from us, nothing in the world could return it to us. The Holy Qur'an hints at this in the following Ayat;

إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ اللَّيْلَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ
يَأْتِيكُمْ بِضِيَاءٍ

'Have ye thought, if Allah made night everlasting for you till the Day of Resurrection, who is a God beside Allah who could bring you light?'

And;

إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ النَّهَارَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ
يَأْتِيكُمْ بِلَيْلٍ تَسْكُنُونَ فِيهِ

'Have ye thought, if Allah made day everlasting for you till the Day of Resurrection, who is a God beside Allah who could bring you night wherein ye rest.'

In brief first one ought to reflect about those blessings which are peculiar to one's own person and of which many others are deprived, then one should reflect about those blessings which are common to all mankind, but each of which is so unique that even if the worlds most outstanding thinkers, most powerful leaders and greatest scientists would get together, yet they would not be able to produce something comparable, and if any of those blessings would be seized from us they could do nothing to bring it back.

Imam Ghazali رحمه الله عليه has written a book on this subject

(Al Hikmatu fee Makhlooqaat Allah), which has been published also in Urdu under the same title and the study of which would be tremendously useful in developing consciousness of Allah's blessings and attaining Maqaam-e-Shukr, the station of gratitude.

MAQAAM-E-ZUHD THE STATION OF ABSTINENCE

چیت دنیا؟ از خدا غافل شدن

'Zuhd' literally means to abstain from a thing to which one feels inclined in order to attain some thing better. In Islam it means to give up worldly pleasures or the sake of the hereafter. From this it becomes clear that Zuhd is more than merely abstaining from worldly pleasure. So if due to insensibility anyone gives up worldly pleasures, then this will not be called 'Zuhd'.

Then people often misunderstand the true meaning of 'giving up worldly pleasures for the sake of the hereafter'. Some consider 'Zuhd' to be synonymous to 'Rahbaniyat', i.e. monasticism and think that day-to-day activities like trading or adopting any other means of earning one's livelihood, eating drinking and so forth are contrary to the demands of 'Zuhd'. Such considerations however are completely against the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Always remember that there are certain objectives of worldly life without which mankind's subsistence would be impossible and working towards the attainment of which are a part of human nature, e.g. sufficient food and drink and trying to make a living. Things like these are called 'Huqooq-e-Nafs', and according to the Holy Law it is man's duty to discharge the rights of his Nafs, and wilfully denying one's Nafs its rights is called 'Rahbaniyat', which has been prohibited in the Holy Qur'an. And in one Hadith is mentioned that the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

طلب المعاش فريضة بعد الفريضة

'Earning one's living to a duty after other (religious) duties.'

This is the reason why Hazrat Hakeemul Ummat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ used to urge his disciples to take good care of their health, for this, too, is included in the right of one's Nafs, and a person

with failing health is not able to do anything.

The next thing is 'Huzooz-e-Nafs', i.e. such sensual pleasures and delights which are neither essential for man's survival, nor is their attainment a part of human nature, man acquires them only to gratify any unnecessary desires of his Nafs. Abstaining this kind of pleasures is called 'Zuhd' which is considered as highly laudable in Islam. And whenever there is mention of 'giving up worldly pleasures' in the Holy Qur'an, the sacred Ahadith or the writings of jurists and saints it alludes to 'Zuhd' and not 'Rahibaniyat'.

The honourable Sufis have mentioned that there are three degrees of 'Zuhd':

1. The highest degree is that one detests worldly goods so much that even if one has received something thereof without having asked for it one dislikes it, but yet, in spite of this aversion, one makes use thereof to fulfil one's need and leaves aside whatever is beyond one's basic requirements. Such was the blessed condition of Allah's Final Messenger ﷺ who has said;

مَا لِي وَلِلدُّنْيَا إِنَّمَا أَنَا كَمَثَلِ رَاكِبٍ اسْتَظَلَّ شَجَرَةً ثُمَّ ارْتَحَلَ (او)
كما قال عليه السلام

'What do I have to do with this world? I am like a rider resting a while under the shade of a tree and then departs.'

This is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ contended himself with very little food and drink a number of traditions in the 'Shamaail-e-Tirmidhi' indicate that he never ate to his fill. Sayyida Aisha رضي الله عنها narrates that at times they would sustain themselves on dates and water for months on end.

2. The second degree of Zuhd is that a person neither detests worldly goods, nor has he got any particular desire for them. If by chance he happens to acquire something above his actual requirements he is grateful to Allah and then makes use of that thing, and if he gets nothing then this does not grieve him.

During Haji Imdadullah Makki's رحمه الله عليه stay in

Makkah Mukarramah it once happened that he was burgled. The thieves had swept his house completely empty. Nothing was left. When Haji Imdadullah رحمه الله عليه got to know about this it did not seem to have upset him the least, rather in a strangely touching manner he recited;

مَا بَچَ نَه دَرَايَم و غَم بَچَ نَه دَارِيَم

After sometime the stolen goods were eventually recovered; Haji Imdadullah رحمه الله عليه expressed his pleasure at the turn of affairs and took back his belongings. Something similar is reported to have happened to Qutb Deen Bakhtiar رحمه الله عليه.

3. The third degree of 'Zuhd' is that a person feels attracted towards the good things of this world, but he does not overly hanker behind them. This is why his like for worldly pleasures does not cause him to become unmindful of Allah. This state is also called 'Qana'at' i.e. contentment. Maulana Rumi رحمه الله عليه has beautifully depicted this condition. He says:

چیت دنیار از خدا غافل شدن
نے قماش و نقرہ و فرزند و زن

i.e. gold, silver, women and children are not worldliness, worldliness means that man's thoughts revolve around nothing but worldly pleasures and how to acquire them, so much that he becomes neglectful of his Lord and creator. So if any one happens to be affluent, but yet his wealth does not make him oblivious of Allah, then this is not 'worldliness' and if someone owns nothing but a few pennies which occupy his heart and mind, then this is 'worldliness' and therefore despicable.

Let me narrate an anecdote to illustrate the point. Once there was a man well known for his piety and spiritual excellencies, who also happened to be a great merchant. One person who got to know about his piety and saintliness came to him, desiring to become his disciple. However when he saw

that the saint spent a considerable period of time on his trade, some doubts cropped up in his mind and he said 'Sir! Is such a large business not against the demands of 'Zuhd'. The saint kept silent. One day he strolled the fields, far away from the bustling city when the saint said out of a sudden 'Brother how about going for Hajj?' The disciple replied 'well, I feel like going.' - 'Then lets 'go' said the saint and began to walk in the direction of Makkah.' The disciple said; 'Sir, I had left my sheet in the city, please let me go and get it. To this the saint replied; 'you seem to be quite worried about your sheet, but you have obviously not realized that I leave my whole business unattended.' The disciple felt ashamed and said; 'Now I see where I went wrong.'

Maulana Rumi has beautifully explained the matter. He says that man is like a boat and worldly life is like a river. The boat cannot move without water as long as it is surrounded by water it will remain afloat and all is well and fine. But once water enters the boat it becomes the means of its destruction. Similarly is the case of man and worldly pleasures. As long as the good things of this world surround man they are a blessing for him, but once they enter his heart, once they become the centre of his thoughts they shall become the cause of his ruin:

آب اند زیر کشتی پستی است
آب در کشتی بلب کشتی است

In this parable Maulana Rumi has so excellently illustrated the reality of 'world' and 'worldliness' that there remains nothing further to say. To sum up, the essence of 'Zuhd' is that man keeps his heart vacant for Allah, no matter whether he is amongst his family, whether he strives to earn his livelihood, whether he enjoys his meals or takes rest or amuses himself in any other manner. He does not let his heart be filled with love for worldly pleasures rather he reserves his heart for the remembrance of his Lord and Creator. How well has Akbar Allahabadi said;

یہ کہاں کا فسانہ سود و زیاں جو گیا سو گیا جو ملا س ملا
کہو دل سے کہ فرصت عمر ہے کم جو دلا تو خدا ہی یاد دلا

There is no such thing as profit and loss whatever is gone is gone, whatever you got you got. Tell they heart that life is short if you want me I think of something, then make me think of God.

And Khwaja Majzooob رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said;

دنیا میں ہوں دنیا کا طلب گار نہیں ہوں
بازار سے گذرا ہوں خریدار نہیں ہوں

'I live in this world, yet I do not long for it I pass by the market without me being customer.'

In the present age it is very difficult to reach the first two degrees of 'Zuhd'. And if nowadays anyone was to suffer poverty and starvation it is quite possible that such a person transgresses the limits set by the Holy Law. Therefore spiritual luminaries of this age hold that these days one should try to attain the third degree. Haji Imdadullah Makki رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say to his disciples; 'I have undergone the rigours of poverty and starvation on behalf of all of you. For you 'Zuhd' means to make a living from lawful sources and not to become unmindful of Allah.'

MAQAAM-E-TAWHEED "THE STATION OF UNITY"

کے داں کے خواں کے بین کے جو

One more inward state which man needs to attain is 'Tawheed'. One aspect of 'Tawheed' as you all know, is to believe in the oneness of Allah and not to associate anything with him. This is also called Tawheed I'teqadi. This aspect of 'Tawheed' is related to a person's faith and his being a believer depends on it. Unless he firmly believes in the oneness of Allah he shall not be considered a Muslim. In the terms of Tasawwaf however 'Tawheed' refers to 'Tawheed Amali' which is a more advanced stage of 'Tawheed I'teqadi'. It means that a person lives up to his faith in 'Tawheed' until he is completely overtaken by that condition, which means that he is every single moment conscious of the fact that whatever comes to pass comes to pass only because of Almighty Allah, who is One and has no partners. He has absolute control over all that happens in the universe, and not even the tiniest of particles can stir save by His leave. This is what every Muslim believes in, but at times of anxiety or happiness, grief or joy one not always remains conscious of this fact, because when a person experiences pain or pleasure due to any apparent means, then he completely focuses on that outward means, considering it to be the source and origin of his pleasure or pain. 'Tawheed Amali' however demands that man never becomes oblivious of this reality as though they saw it with their own eyes. Some sages have described this state as follows:-

”توحید خدا واحد دیدن بود، نہ واحد گفتن“

When man realizes that it is no one else but Allah Most High who is at the control of all affairs, then he becomes independent of people's friendship or enmity, because he knows that whatever pleasure or pain he experiences comes from Allah and that any human who seems to be the apparent

cause of this experience is nothing more but an intermediary:

از خدا دل خائف دشمن و دوست کہ دل ہر دو در تصرف اوست

It has been reported from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that whenever he was confronted with an adverse situation, then instead of showing signs of anger or grief he would simply say;

ما شاء الله کان وما لم يَشأ لا يکون

'Whatever Allah willed came to pass and whatever is against His will won't come to pass.'

And indeed, there is no better source of consolation at times of anxiety and grief than this prescription.

Imam Ghazali has illustrated this point through a parable. He says that once a man blamed a sword; 'you have hit me!' The sword replied; 'How could I? I have got not strength of my own. It was the hand which used me, so go and blame the hand.' The man then blamed the hand which replied; 'what wrong have I done? I have got no sense of my own. It was the 'intention' which drove me.' So if you want to quarrel, then quarrel with the 'intention'. The man then blamed the 'intention' which said; 'what am I, it was the heart which made me do whatever I did.' The man then came to the heart which said what is my reality? I myself an under control of a mighty force;

القلوب بین اصبعی الرحمن

This is how each and every move and action originate from a single source; Allah Most High, Lord of Majesty and Glory.

Remaining always conscious of this fact is what 'Tawheed Amali' demands. And once a person has attained this station to the degree of perfection he will neither feel an urge to flatter anyone nor to stoop before anyone, nor will he fear anyone except Allah; neither will he be driven to do something out of greed, nor out of fear for his life. Shaykh Saadi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said:

موتد! چہ بر پائے ریزی زرش چہ فولاد ہندی نمی بر سرش

امید و ہراسش نہ باشد بکس ہمیں است بنیاد توحید و بس

This is so because he not only knows, rather he witnesses with his own eyes the fact that even if all mankind would unite to benefit me, they would not be able to do so, neither would any harm befall me, even if the whole creation would unite against me, so why should I fear anyone? Why should I flatter someone, why should I covet something? Neither does such a person have any hope and expectations from someone, which, if disappointed, would frustrate him. He is so completely raptured by his relation with Almighty Allah that;

کے داں کے خواں کے میں کے جو

has become the motto of his life.

Now arises the question as how to attain this blessed state? As a matter of fact every Muslim has got faith in 'Tawheed', but since man has got a tendency to fix his sight on apparent means only his faith has become some what overshadowed by vain imaginations. In the words of Imam Ghazali, just like every human being knows perfectly well that a corpse is void of life, void of any ability to move or act on its own, yet, in spite of this conviction, man abhors to sleep on a bed with a corpse next to him. This does at mean that he does not consider the corpse to be lifeless, there is no doubt, he is fully convinced that there is no life in a corpse, but certain vain imaginations and superstitions upset his mind. Similarly, every Muslim considers outward means to have no power of their own, but his heart lacks strength so as not to be overwhelmed by vain imaginations. However once the heart has become strong enough this station will easily be attained. Hazrat Majzoob رحمۃ اللہ علیہ said;

کچھ بھی مجنون! جو بصیرت تجھے حاصل ہو جائے

تو نے لیلیٰ جسے سمجھا ہے وہ محمل ہو جائے

One can acquire this strength of heart through 'Muraqabaat'. Each day one should ponder for some time about what occurs in the world. One will come to realize how every day man's schemes and designs are utterly defeated.

This way soon the clouds of vain imagination which overshadowed one's heart will clear up; perfect faith in Tawheed will permeate each spere of his being until he is completely overtaken by that condition.

There is however need for an accomplished Shaykh who guides one in this affair, lest one commits any excesses in this regard.

As far as 'excesses' are concerned one should remember two points, one that although Allah Most High is Creator of good and evil, and that whatever pleasure or pain man experiences comes from Allah, yet it is a matter of etiquette to link only goodness to Allah and not evil. In the Holy Qur'an is mentioned.

﴿مَا يَفْتَحُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا وَمَا يُمْسِكُ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ﴾

'That which Allah openeth unto mankind of mercy none can withhold it; and that which He withholdeth none can release thereafter.'

Here Allah Most High has mentioned 'mercy' along with 'openeth', but not along with 'withholdeth', rather He did not specify the thing withheld. From this is learnt that it is against etiquette to relate the withholding of mercy to Allah. Another point is that although at times certain events do not seem to be a mercy, yet they are a mercy, in one way or the other.

This is exactly what Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام did. In the Holy Qur'an is mentioned how he relates whatever good he experiences to his Lord, he says for example that it is He who guides me, it is He who gives me food and drink and then he says;

وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِي

And when I sicken then He healeth me.

Here Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام has related cure to Almighty Allah and disease to himself. Similarly Hazrat Khidr عليه السلام has said at one place;

فَارَدْنَا أَنْ يُدِلَّهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِنْهُ زَكَاةً وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا

He had related the intention to effect good to Allah Most High, whereas in the story concerning a ship he said;

فَارَدْتُ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا

And I wished to mar it.

Since here the word عيب (i.e. mar, fault, blemish) has been used, he related his intention and resulting action to himself. This is why the honourable jurists have written that if a person uses for Almighty Allah only the words خالق الكلاب والخنازير (i.e. creator of dogs and swines), he becomes an infidel. Another point is that although Allah Most High alone is the one who has got full control over each and every particle of His creation yet the Islamic Shariat has not disregarded the apparent means as far as worldly injunctions are concerned. The Holy Law has granted them certain rights, because in spite of Allah Most High being the real incharge of all affairs, the one whom He caused to be an apparent means deserve acknowledgment, too.

So if anyone did you a favour, then you ought to thank him. This is also the reason why scholars hold that students ought to respect the tools which aid them in their acquisition of knowledge, such as pen, ink, inkpot, paper and so forth. But how to distinguish to which extent one should regard should be shown to such outward means? This is one consideration which those walking the path of 'Tawheed Amali' need to make, and the guidance of an accomplished Shaykh is essential to set the limits.

This way soon the clouds of vain imagination which overshadowed one's heart will clear up; perfect faith in Tawheed will permeate each spere of his being until he is completely overtaken by that condition.

There is however need for an accomplished Shaykh who guides one in this affair, lest one commits any excesses in this regard.

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MAQAAM-E- TAWAKKUL "THE STATION OF RELIANCE"

بر توکل پایہ اشتر بہ بند

'Tawakkul', too, is one of the inner states which man must strive to attain, and this is in fact only possible once a person has attained the station of 'Tawheed'. The Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah strongly emphasize the virtues of Tawakkul mentioning its many benefits. In today's assembly we shall discuss the reality of 'Tawakkul'.

'Tawakkul' is an Arabic word which has been derived from 'Wakalat' which literally means to entrust one's affair to someone. In terms of religion it means that man, instead of relying on outward means, relies on Allah and entrusts his affairs to him.

Now think, when do we trust someone? And what characteristics should the one whom we consider trustworthy have? If we consider the matter, then we come to the conclusion that we consider someone as trustworthy when three characteristics are found in him, namely knowledge, power, as well as affection and sympathy.

In other words, first of all you want to be certain that the one whom you trust is well aware of the state of your affairs, otherwise he will not be able to benefit you.

Thereafter you want to be sure that he is able to carry it out whatever task you entrust to him because otherwise he will not be in a position to help you in any way whatsoever. Likewise you want to be sure that the one whom you trust is your well wisher, that he sympathizes with you and cares for you because if that is not the case then neither his knowledge nor abilities are of any use for you.

Now look around you. Can you find any human being in whose person these three characteristics are combined to the degree of perfection. Is there anyone in whose knowledge,

power and sympathy you can trust no matter in which affair. If your outlook is realistic, then your answer will be in the negative. No matter how hard you try, you will not find such a person in whom these three attributes are found to the degree of such perfection that you could entrust each and every affair of your life to him without the least concern.

Now think about Allah, Lord of Majesty and Glory. Does He not unite these three characteristics in Himself? Is He not perfect in these attributes? His perfection far exceeds the scope of human imagination. So does He not deserve that man entrust Him every affair of his life, that he relies on Him alone? Of course! This is why it has been said in the Holy Qur'an;

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

And in Allah let believers put their trust.

THREE TYPES OF "TAWAKKUL"

Since people are prone to misunderstanding the nature of 'Tawakkul' it ought to be mentioned first of all that 'Tawakkul' is of three types;

1. One type of 'Tawakkul' is that man entrusts his case to Allah in theory, but practically he focuses on outward means which continuously occupy his mind. This can be compared to the following example, someone has engaged a lawyer to represent his case at court, but yet he does not become unconcerned, rather he keeps thinking about that process and what else he can do to win the case.
2. The second type of 'Tawakkul' is that you do make use of outward means, but only because Allah decreed that they be employed. Thereafter you fully entrust your case to Allah, always remaining conscious of the fact that outward means have got no power on their own, that it is Allah alone who manages your affairs. Therefore he concentrates mainly on calling unto Allah, begging Him to fulfil your needs. This can be compared to a child who, when he needs something, calls his mother. Even if he himself can somewhat move his hands and feet he

does not rest content with that. He wants his mother to take notice of him, since she is the one who can fulfil his need.

3. The third type of 'Tawakkul' is that man's reliance on Allah is so perfect that he does not the least care about outward means, so far that he not even calls unto Allah. He thinks that Allah is very well aware of my suffering, so He will surely help me.

In one tradition is mentioned that when Namrood was about to cast Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام into the fire Hazrat Jibrael عليه السلام came to him saying if you need me, I shall be there to help you.' Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام replied;

و اما اليك فلا و اما الله فهو يعلم ما بي

As for you, no, I do not need you, and as for Allah, I need Him, but He Himself knows about my state.

The first stage out of the three types of Tawakkul is very ordinary. It is the lowest degree of Tawakkul, whereas the third type is, keeping in mind the nature of Tawakkul, the most superior. But it is related only to certain conditions and states experienced by prophets and high ranking saints. It is not a sharai requirement to develop this degree of Tawakkul.

Tawakkul of the second type however is what we are enjoined to acquire. This kind of Tawakkul has been declared the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, namely to make moderate use of outward means, to pray to Allah and to rely on Him alone rather than the means at one's disposal.

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TAWAKKUL AND TARK-E-ASBAAB

بر توکل پایہ اشتر بہ بند

Some ignorant people have completely misinterpreted 'Tawakkul', which according to their understanding implies completely giving up all outward standing means, basing their view on certain poetic verses and statements made by Sufis regarding the excellence of giving up outward means. The real meaning of such statements however is that one always should remember the true nature of outward means, that they can neither benefit nor harm someone, that benefit or harm are in the hands of Allah Most High, They never meant to say that one should completely give up outer means.

Here it seems appropriate to mention some details concerning this matter. Whatever man does is meant to attain any of the following three objectives; trying to acquire something, protecting and preserving something one has already acquired or warding off some misfortune. Day and night the world strives to attain the above three objectives, for the purpose of which Allah has created certain means, and these means are the three types.

1. Yaqeenî Asbaab

i.e. such means about which one is absolutely certain that they will help one attaining one's objective, e.g. one feels hungry and happens to have some bread. One can be absolutely certain that eating the bread will satisfy one's hunger. Giving up this kind of means is not 'Tawakkul'. It is sheer madness and unlawful.

2. Zannî Asbaab

i.e. such means about one is quite sure but not absolutely certain that adopting them will help one achieve one's objective, e.g. earning one's livelihood through trade, agriculture and so forth. As far as giving up these means is concerned, there are two possibilities; one, that one does not

adopt them at all nor living at a place where these means are available, e.g. a person's retiring to the wilderness. Doing so is not permissible. The second possibility is that one continues to live at a place where these means are available but does not adopt them, e.g. lives a person resides in a city, does not keep aloof from people but does nothing to earn a living. Under normal circumstances this, too, is impermissible but if certain conditions are fulfilled doing so becomes permissible.

- a) That such a person has got no dependents covering the expenses of whom is not his legal responsibility.
- b) That he is firm in his resolve and steadfast.
- c) That he is content with the Divine Decree.
- d) That he does not beg from others, directly or indirectly.

If anyone fulfils these conditions, then it is permissible for him to give up means of livelihood, but if only one of these conditions is not fulfilled, then doing so becomes unlawful. Those honourable Sufis about whom it has been mentioned that they gave up means of livelihood, their state of being was such that they were indeed perfectly content with what had been ordained for them, they were steadfast and firm in their resolve. No one who saw them could ever have guessed that they are starving Qur'an has been said about the Ashaab-e-Suffah:

﴿يَحْسِبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ﴾ (البقره)

'The unthinking man accounteth them wealthy because of their restraint.'

Here it needs to be remembered that those companions or Sufis who had reportedly abandoned means of livelihood, have done so to fulfil any communal requirement or to reform themselves, otherwise, under normal circumstances it is better if man earns a living for himself. This is in no way against 'Tawakkul'. Such was the Tawakkul of the Prophets ﷺ, the companions and high-ranking saints, that they would earn their living and rely on none except Allah.

Anwaar-e-Suhaili is a well known Persian book. In it has been narrated a very thought provoking story:

Once a man saw a crow whose wings were cut. He thought, Poor thing, how is it going to survive? From where shall it get its food? Hardly a moment had passed when that person spotted an eagle carrying some prey in its beak. The eagle came closer, landed and fed the crow. On seeing this the man thought 'This is how Allah provides for His creatures, so why should I worry about earning a living. Allah will provide for me.' So he sat down and remained idle. Some days passed but yet the person did not get anything. One wise man said to him, 'O servant of Allah, you were shown two birds, one injured crow and an eagle. Why did you prefer to become like the crow? Why did you not think about becoming like the eagle who not only eats himself but also feeds others who are in need?

This story illustrates very well the real nature of 'Tawakkul'. If anyone has yet means of livelihood at his disposal, then he should not give up those means. His case is like that of the eagle. He should not only fulfil his own needs but also look after others. Yes, if someone is deprived of those means due to any disability or other compelling circumstances, then he should not worry too much either as to from where he shall receive his sustenance. Rather he should think that those means were nothing but instruments, that it is Allah alone who provides. If He wishes to keep me alive, then He will surely make some arrangement for me.

The honourable Sufis have also elucidated the following point, whether in cases Tark-e-Asbaab is permissible, it is better to give up outward means, and rely solely on Allah or to adopt those means. Shaykh Abdullah Tastari says that anyone who condemns the use of outward means is in fact objecting against the wisdom of Allah, and anyone who condemns Tark-e-Asbaab in case of its being permissible is in fact denying the true nature of Tawheed. Therefore, under such circumstances, either course of action is permissible, but the best way is there one which was followed by the prophets and companions, namely to adopt outward means, but yet to rely solely on Allah. One should not consider outward means to be

adopt them at all nor living at a place where these means are available, e.g. a person's retiring to the wilderness. Doing so is not permissible. The second possibility is that one continues to live at a place where these means are available but does not adopt them, e.g. lives a person resides in a city, does not keep aloof from people but does nothing to earn a living. Under normal circumstances this, too, is impermissible but if certain conditions are fulfilled doing so becomes permissible.

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a source of benefit or harm. This reality is reflected in the following short yet comprehensive statement of Allah's Messenger ﷺ.

اعقل ما فيها وتوكل

And especially in the present age this is the best way to follow, for even under circumstances rendering Tark-e-Asbaab permissible giving up outward means might lead to great mischief and that way at least one will not develop pride.

3. Asbaab-e-Khufiya

One more type of outward means is known as 'Asbaab-e-Khufiya' which refers to conceive very detailed, subtle long term plans which is definitely contrary to the demands of Tawakkul. Islam teaches us that whatever objective we intend to attain, we should try to do so by adopting the means at our disposal rather than occupying ourselves with sophisticated plans and tactics. In one Hadith the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said;

اجملوا في الطلب وتوكلوا عليه

i.e. 'Adopt simple means to attain your objective and then rely on Allah.'

In the Saheeh Muslim is one tradition in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ makes mention of those who shall enter paradise without having to account for their deeds. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that they are those who;

لا يكتوون

Do not resort to branding as medical treatment.

This, too, indicates that in Islam it is disliked to chalk out highly ambitious, sophisticated plans, because the Arabs considered branding with an iron rod to be the last possible treatment, as can be understood from the saying:

آخر الدواء الكي

Branding is the last form of medication.

The course of action adopted by Allah's Messenger ﷺ was

that he would use whatever means were at his disposal and thereafter he would pray;

اللهم هذا الجهد و عليك التكلان

O Allah, this is what I could do, and on you I rely.

Once in Delhi, during the war of 1857 a group of pious men were under a siege. Outside the house to which they were confined the ongoing carnage had reached its peak, so it was impossible to leave the building. They had run out of water already two, three days ago. When thirst became unbearable one of the men placed a vessel under the rain-pipe and prayed, 'O Allah, this is all I could do. Letting it rain is your job.' Within no time it began to rain and everyone's thirst was quenched. To sum up, it is not proper to give up outward means altogether. Tawakkul' actually means to remain conscious of the true nature of those means, and not to rely on them, no matter what. Rather one should make moderate use of whatever means one has at his disposal and then entrust one's case of Allah. Moderation in this regard however is very difficult, and usually it is not possible to attain that station without the guidance of an accomplished Shaykh, therefore the best way to attain 'Maqaam-e-Tawakkul' is to consult an accomplished Shaykh, to keep him well-informed about one's state of being and to follow his instructions.

THE END

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THE END

SOME TERMS EXPLAINED

<i>Abid</i>	i.e. Worshipper.
<i>Alim</i>	i.e. (religious) Scholar.
<i>Aqaaid (sg. Aqeedah)</i>	i.e. Tenets of faith.
<i>Asbaab</i>	Outward means of realizing one's objective. Asbaab are of three types, Yaqeeni Asbaab, Zanni Asbaab, Asbaab-e-Kufiyah.
<i>Ashaab-e-Suffah</i>	Those of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ companions who lived on the verandah of his mosque, who had no dependants and could therefore dedicate themselves fully to the acquisition of religious knowledge. They lived in a state of abject poverty. Most of them had only a single sheet to cover themselves. They would often go hungry for days on end. They were about eighty in number. Among them were such outstanding companions as Sayyidina Bilal and Sayyidina Abu Huraira ؓ.
<i>Awraad (sg. Wird)</i>	i.e. a routine set of recital of Allah's beautiful names, for instance.
<i>Fadhaail (sg. Fadheelah)</i>	i.e. Virtues.
<i>Faqeeh</i>	i.e. Jurisprudent.
<i>Faraaidh (sg. Fareedhah)</i>	i.e. religious obligation.
<i>Fiqh</i>	i.e. Science of jurisprudence.
<i>Hakeem</i>	i.e. a physician who treats according to the principles of ancient Greek, Ayurvedic and certain indigenous types of medicine.
<i>Hakeemul Ummat</i>	i.e. "Physician of the Ummat" Honourary title of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمه الله عليه.
<i>Hasad</i>	i.e. Envy.

SOME TERMS EXPLAINED

<i>Abid</i>	i.e. Worshipper.
<i>Alim</i>	i.e. (religious) Scholar.
<i>Aqaaid (sg. Aqeedah)</i>	i.e. Tenets of faith.
<i>Asbaab</i>	Outward means of realizing one's objective. Asbaab are of three types, Yaqeeni Asbaab, Zanni Asbaab, Asbaab-e-Kufiyah.
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<i>Hawa</i>	i.e. wanton desires, lusts.
<i>Huda</i>	i.e. (Divine) guidance.
<i>Huqooq-e-Nafs</i>	i.e. Rights of one's ?Nafs.
<i>Huzooz-e-Nafs</i>	i.e. Pleasures of one's ?Nafs.
<i>Ikhlas</i>	i.e. Sincerity.
<i>Imam</i>	i.e. the person who leads the congregational prayer; also title of eminent religious scholars.
<i>Itteba-e-Hawa</i>	i.e. following one's vain desires and lusts.
<i>Kaffarah</i>	i.e. Expiation.
<i>Khanqah</i>	i.e. a place to which one resorts in one's quest to spiritual self-realization.
<i>Khateeb</i>	i.e. Preacher.
<i>Khawf</i>	i.e. Fear (of Allah).
<i>Ma'arif</i>	i.e. (Re)cognition.
<i>Maqaam</i>	i.e. Station. This term implies that someone has become so accustomed to a certain virtue that it has become his second nature.
<i>Madaaris (sg. Madrasah)</i>	i.e. Institution of religious learning.
<i>Mahlakat (sg. Mahlikah)</i>	i.e. Things which cause one's destruction.
<i>Manjiaat (sg. Manjiah)</i>	i.e. Things which shall save one.
<i>Masaail (sg. Masalah)</i>	i.e. (religious) proposition, injunction.
<i>Mufassir</i>	i.e. a scholar who has specialized himself in the field of exegesis of the Holy Quran.
<i>Mufti</i>	i.e. someone who is authorized to issue Fataawa (sg. Fatwa, i.e. religious verdicts)
<i>Muhabbat</i>	i.e. Love.
<i>Muhaddith</i>	a scholar who has specialized himself in the field of Hadith .
<i>Mujahadah</i>	i.e. certain forms of (spiritual). exercises one undergoes to reform one's ?Nafs.

<i>Muraqabaat (Muraqabah)</i>	i.e. Meditation, reflection.
<i>Murshid</i>	i.e. spiritual mentor, precept.
<i>Mustahabbaat</i>	i.e. laudable, voluntary deeds which, if performed carry great reward and which, if neglected, entail no punishment.
<i>Nafs</i>	Nafs literally means soul. A believer is expected to cultivate, rather subject his Nafs lest it causes one's ruin.
<i>Nafs Ammarah</i>	i.e. the internal force which lures one into doing evil.
<i>Nafs Lawwamah</i>	i.e. the internal force meant to make a person incline to virtue, the conscience.
<i>Nafs Mutmainnah</i>	i.e. the state in which one's rebellious Nafs has been cultivated to such a degree that it feels so much inclined to virtue as though its evil element had completely ceased to exist.
<i>Rahbaniyat</i>	i.e. Monasticism.
<i>Qaza</i>	i.e. Compensation.
<i>Qazi</i>	i.e. Judge.
<i>Rajaa</i>	i.e. Hope.
<i>Razaail (sg. Razeelah)</i>	i.e. Vices.
<i>Ridha (bil Qada)</i>	i.e. Contentment (with the Divine decree).
<i>Sabr</i>	i.e. Patience, perseverance, steadfastness.
<i>Sabir</i>	i.e. a person who is patient, a patient one.
<i>Sadiq</i>	i.e. a person who is attesting to the truth, a truthful one.
<i>Sahabi (pl. Sahaba)</i>	i.e. the companions of Allah's Messenger ﷺ.
<i>Sahib-e-Nisbat</i>	i.e. someone who has got a special relation with Allah, a saint.
<i>Shahwaat (sg. Shahwah)</i>	i.e. wrong erroneous deeds and actions.

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<i>Shauq</i>	i.e. Yearning, longing.
<i>Shayateen (sg. Shaytan)</i>	i.e. Devils.
<i>Shubhaat (sg. Shubhah)</i>	i.e. erroneous notions.
<i>Shukr</i>	i.e. Gratitude.
<i>Sidq-e-Amali</i>	i.e. Truthfulness translated into action.
<i>Sulook</i>	i.e. traversing the path to spiritual self-realization.
<i>Tab'a Tabi</i>	i.e. someone who has met a Tabi.
<i>Tabi</i>	i.e. someone who has met a Sahabi
<i>Tahiyyatul Masjid</i>	a voluntary prayer offered on entering the mosque (provided it is not an abominable time) and before sitting down. Great virtues have been ascribed to this prayer.
<i>Tahliyah</i>	i.e. Acquisition of <i>Fadhlaail</i>
<i>Takhliyah</i>	i.e. Elimination of <i>Razaail</i>
<i>Taqwa</i>	i.e. warding off evil, piety, fear of Allah.
<i>Tareeqat</i>	another word for <i>Tasawwuf</i> .
<i>Tark-e-Asbaab</i>	i.e. giving up outward means (see also <i>Asbaab</i>)
<i>Tasawwuf</i>	i.e. Mysticism, spiritualism. These terms however are only a vague rendering of this term. A full definition thereof would however exceed the scope of this glossary.
<i>Tasbeehaat (sg. Tasbeeh)</i>	i.e. glorifying Allah. In the subcontinent 'Tasbeeh' is also used to mean 'rosary'.
<i>Tawakkul</i>	i.e. Reliance (on Allah).
<i>Tawbah</i>	i.e. Repentance.
<i>Tawhīd</i>	i.e. Oneness (of Allah).
<i>Tawhīd Amali</i>	i.e. translating one's belief in Tawheed into action.
<i>Tawheed I'teqadi</i>	i.e. Belief in the Oneness of Allah.
<i>Ujb</i>	i.e. Self-conceit.
<i>Uns</i>	i.e. Delight.
<i>Usool-e-Fiqh</i>	i.e. Principles of <i>Fiqh</i> .

<i>Wajibaat</i>	i.e. religious obligations. The difference between <i>Faraaidh</i> and <i>Wajibaat</i> is that the former are of absolute nature, whereas the latter are not.
<i>Waliullah</i>	i.e. a friend of Allah, a saint
<i>Wazaaif (sg. Wazeefah)</i>	i.e. a routine set of recital
<i>Zahid</i>	i.e. someone who abstains from the pleasures of this worldly life
<i>Zuhd</i>	i.e. Abstinence

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This is the translation of Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Uthmani's رحمه الله عليه book "Dil Ki Dunya" in a very clear explicit form.

The book traces the stages of *sufism*. In origin it was applied to religious knowledge and mystic life but, with time, innovation crept in and knowledge was ignored. Actually, *tasawwuf* is a branch of religion.

This book not only defines *tasawwuf* but also deals with its basics and explains its terminology. Coming from the pen of Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمه الله عليه it is an authoritative work. Opinions of many scholars are mentioned and quotations of different authorities are given.

This book is good reading for a novice. It also lists the pitfalls on which an inexperienced person may stumble. An exhaustive glossary and a simple index are appended.